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THE
L A Y
OF
THE POOR FIDDLER,
A
PARODY
ON THE
Lay of the Last Minstrel,
WITH
NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY AN ADMIRER OF WALTER SCOTT.

————— For ne'er
Was flattery lost on poet's ear :
A simple race ! they waste their toil
For the vain tribute of a smile !

Lay of the Last Minstrel, Canto iv.

London :

PUBLISHED BY B. AND R. CROSBY & CO. AND SOLD BY
ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1814.

Y A H

to

THE POOR INDIANS

A

TRAIL

ON THE

TO THE EAST COAST

OF THE

INDIAN TRAIL

AND THE HISTORY OF THE INDIAN TRAIL

THE INDIAN TRAIL
AND THE HISTORY OF THE INDIAN TRAIL

THE INDIAN TRAIL

THE INDIAN TRAIL AND THE HISTORY OF THE INDIAN TRAIL

THE INDIAN TRAIL AND THE HISTORY OF THE INDIAN TRAIL

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INTRODUCTION.



THE night was dark, the wind did howl,
When Tom the Fiddler left his bowl;
His nose once of a fiery hue,
Was now deep tinged with modest blue;
Fierce o'er the heath the wind 'did blow,
And swiftly fell the drifting snow.—
Tom was returning from the fair
With lightsome heart devoid of care;
His fiddle as I've heard it sung,
Across one ample shoulder hung
In leathern case, and by his side
A horn of snuff was well supplied;
A huge nob-stick he firmly grasped,
And to his breast a loaf he clasped.—
Poor fellow! he had missed his road,
He bore besides a heavy load

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Of bottled ale, whose potent spirit,
Had nigh eclipsed his modest merit.
His twinkling eyes now strive in vain
To find the well-known path again ;
He reels along from side to side,
And swears the cause-way is too wide.
Poor Tom had once seen better days
Than fiddling for a looby's praise :
At country club, or wake, or fair,
He would have scorned to scrape a hair,
But now alas ! old times are gone ;
He roams neglected and unknown ;
And strangers claim that high renown,
Which Tommy once had thought his own ;
No longer did he hold the band,
Of country fiddlers at command,
No more amidst the swelling choir,
His nose was seen, that nose of fire ;
No longer courted or caressed,
He scarce was now a welcome guest ;
For from Italia's hostile land,
A greedy troop, a needy band,

Had stripped him of his well-earned praise,
Before he'd numbered half his days,
And he neglected and oppressed,
Was now to churls a scoff and jest.—
Tom staggered on with quickened pace,
The wind still blowing in his face,
And much he wished to find a spot,
Where he might call for something hot,
And rest his head, and wash his throat,
And spend his sole remaining groat—
But long he wandered ere he found,
A living vestige above ground;
For wild and dreary was the road,
Which Tom had taken for his good—
At last he passed a stately hall
Inclosed within a lofty wall;
Tom gazed with a wishful eye—
No humbler resting place was nigh:
Beside the liquor was near spent,
For often he had given it vent,
And now his stomach's growing cold—
'Twas force, not choice, that made him bold.

So with unsteady step, at last,
The iron gates he oped and passed,
Whose ponderous crash as close they bang
Made Tommy's bosom feel a twang.
He loudly for admittance craved,
And said the tempest he had braved
Three tedious hours and scarce could walk,
Tho' God be praised he still could talk.
The lady happened to be nigh,
She heard his voice, and language high,
She marked his wet and dirty clothes,
His pimpled cheek and reverend nose,
And bade her maid the servants tell,
That they should use the fiddler well:
For she had known adversity,
Tho' raised to such a high degree;
And sorrow too, for in her bloom
She wept o'er her third husband's tomb.

When Tom had eased his stomach's pain,
And warm'd and cramm'd, and cramm'd again,

Then did he think of days long past,
And much he wished this cheer would last.
He now began to laugh and sing,
And was as happy as a king ;
He knew full many a funny story,
'Bout lords and dames and love and glory,
And said that would the lady deign,
To listen to his humble strain,
If fiddling she did like to hear,
He could amuse her gracious ear.

This modest boon was soon obtained,
And Tom his wished for audience gained ;
But when he reached the parlour door,
He nearly tumbled on the floor ;
Such elegance ne'er met his eyes,
He seemed struck dumb with dread surprize;
And wished himself again i'th' nook,
For he could neither speak nor look,
But some fair damsel leered and smiled ;
Indeed he looked most wondrous wild :

Oft did he cast his timid eye
Towards the door, he stood close by,
And half resolved to take his flight,
But then it was a stormy night.—
The lady soon relieved his pain
And kindly bade him try a strain ;
She hoped he had been warmed and fed :
Tom did not speak but scratched his head,
His fiddle took, from leathern bag,
And wiped it with his pocket rag ;
Rosined his stick—some discords made,
He wished to please—but was afraid.
In vain he screws the yielding strings,
In vain he tunes, in vain he sings,
Fiddle and fiddler can't agree,
Sure ne'er was heard such harmony.
The lady smiled and praised his song ;
The maids they tittered loud and long,
Till Tom regained his wonted glee
And strung his notes to harmony.
He then did venture from the door,
Some twenty paces (perhaps more,)

And scraped his foot and bowed his head,
A seat he took and thus he said :
“ Fair ladies I was once a poet,
And verses made—perhaps you know it ;
I wish I could again recall
Those strains I sung at Booby Hall :
They were not made for village talk,
Only to please great gentle folk ;
And if you will but list a while,
I think you’ll weep more than you’ll smile,
For ’tis a pitiable tale,
But—I could like a jug of ale
Convenient set, and whilst you cry,
I’ll moisten too—I oft am dry ;
We need not then lose any time,
For when I’m drinking you may whine.”
All things were settled, Tom looked big,
And straight struck up an Irish jig,
Then changed his movement in a trice
And played “ The battle of the Frogs and Mice,”
He tryed again “ *Aileen Aroon* ;”
But still he could not hit the tune—

At last he caught it clear and pat,
He poised his leg, and kicked his hat,
Then hemmed and coughed and turned his chair,
And scraped the strings with tough horse-hair ;
And, whilst his fiddle loudly rung,
'Twas thus that **TOM THE FIDDLER** sung.

THE
L A Y
OF
THE POOR FIDDLER.

IN SIX CANTOS.

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THE
LAY OF THE POOR FIDDLER.

CANTO FIRST.

I.

THE supper was over at Mac-Marnock Hall,
And the Ladye looked out from her turret so tall;
The turret was high and the wind did blow,
Yet she was not afraid of a tumble below—
Holy St. Timothy guard us well !
'Tis said she hath dealings with goblins fell,
And now she doth work a horrible spell ;
Save her ladyship, there's not a breathing soul,
Dare enter that door or peep through the key-hole.

II.

The tables were placed against the wall ;
Cook and scullion, watch and sentry,
Strutted through the smoaky hall,
Or talked of sweethearts in the pantry ;
Two mongrel curs, with legs outstretched ;
Lay basking on the scorching hearth,
Dreaming of carrion, stolen or fetched
From Dan the butcher's at Clan-Tarth.

III.

Nine-and-twenty half starved knights,
Hung their hats in Marnock Hall ;
Nine-and-twenty squires (strange frights,)
Played them at coits and tennis-ball ;
Nine-and-twenty footmen small
Waited courteous, on them all :
They were all men of stomachs great,
But little I trow did they get to eat.

IV.

Ten of them wore coats of steel,
With iron stockings, out at th' heel,

They did not doff this cool array,
Neither by night, nor yet by day :
They snored by the fire,
In their iron attire,
Their pillow was the hearth-stone hard :
They ate at the meal
With knives of steel,
And they drank small-beer, through the helmet
barred.

V.

Ten squires, with faces long and lean,
(Such phizes sure were never seen)
Waited the beck of these knights I ween ;
Thirty steeds, black, brown, and white,
Stood saddled in stable day and night ;
Their bones stood high, and their flesh lay low,
You might count every rib from the saddle-bow ;
A hundred jack-asses starved in a stall,
For such was the custom at Mac-Marnock Hall.

MOVE VI. *And who for him*

Why do these steeds now stand so slim?

Why watch these ill-looking knights so grim?

They watch, for the sound of the great blood-hound

That will nose them a mile off by smelling at

th' ground;

They watch to see great bonfires burning,

On every hill, at every turning;

They watch with solemn awe and fear,

Lest a host of constables appear!

MOVE VII.—VIII. *And who for him*

Such is the custom at Marnock Hall,—

Many an ugly knight is there;

But he the ugliest of them all,

His trap-stick hangs by his tennis-ball,

Close to his rusty spear,

Fiddlers long shall knell,

His funeral bell,

And tell how thick-legged Sawney fell!

IX:

Many a blubbering nose was blown

When o'er his grave the clowns had bent;
And many a grunt and many a groan;

Old maids and hobbling matrons lent;
But the Dame she did not shed a tear!
Perhaps another husband was near;

Or else it was her swelling pride

Forbade her weep like other folk;
And made her strive her sorrow to hide,

For she did neither cry nor talk:
Until, from Betty's great broad knee
Lisped forth her little darling son—

“If Daddy's murderer I see,
I'll shoot him with my great pop-gun!”

Then fast the tears did trickle down;
And wet her cheeks—and wet her gown.

X:

With dirty face, and stockings loose,

With wet and draggled clothes,
Wept Margery like a silly goose,

And oft she blew her nose.

Her grief was not so great I trow

For her dear father's sake ;

As that she did fear, her lover dear,

Would soon be made to quake :

For he to take her father's life,

The constables did aid ;

And she cried to think if she was not a wife,

She perhaps might die an old maid.

To ease her grief she sought her bed,

Right well she knew her noble mother ;

Before Lord Harry she should wed,

Would see her married to her brother !

XI.

Of a learned race the Ladye came ;

Her father was a man of fame,

A clerk and almanack-maker :

He taught her to call the stars by name,

And as wise as himself soon did make her.

Men said and women too, full well

He knew if they communed together ;

By night or day he could foretell

The change of empires and foul weather.

XII.

The Dame now sits in her turret so tall,
Just by a black patch on the wall,
Where her father did put his greasy head,
When he studied the works of the mighty dead.
She listens to a strange noise near,
Which sounds i'faith most shocking queer.
Is it the rattle of pots and pans?
Is it the jingle of milk cans?
Is it the sound of Betty's great foot,
Which she upon the stairs doth put?
Is it the cruel love of cats?
Or can it be the mice or rats
Which make this strange uncertain clatter?—
I wonder what can be the matter?

XIII.

The mongrel curs at this strange sound,
Their tails between their legs do thrust;
And loud they yelp, like a startled hound,
And drop the half-chewed stolen crust.
In the hall, each gallant knight,
And each long-visaged squire,

Did quake with sore affright;

And crept closer unto the fire!

XIV.

From the sound of the rattling pans,

From the jingle of milk-cans,

From the sound of Betty's foot

Which she upon the stairs doth put,

From the cruel love of cats,

From the galloping of mice or rats,

The Dame she knew it well!

It was the Spirit of the Pig-stye spoke,

And he called on the Spirit of the Dung-hill.

XV.

Pig-Stye Spirit.

“Sleepest thou on thy soft bed brother?”

Dung-Hill Spirit.

—“Brother, nay—

On my soft breast the rats do play,

With many a merry round so gay,

This night they all keep holiday:

In every hole black beetles crawl,

And dung-hill flies here sport away.

Up from thy sty where pigs do lie,
And mark them trip it merrily!"

XVI.

Pig-Stye Spirit.

"Into my trough a maiden's tears

Shower fast from out yon casement small;

Sweet Margery is full of fears,

She must go to her grave in a maiden's pall.

Tell me, thou, from whose inside

Foul things and witches charms do glide,

The beetle black, and slimy snail,

The spell-bound toad without a tail,

When shall cease these cruel wars?

When shall cease these feudal jars?

What shall Margery's husband be?

Shall she her husband ever see?"

XVII.

Dung-Hill Spirit.

"Foul animals are crawling in me,

I smoke like any ale-house chimney;

Methinks I am most woeful strong;

I shall grow worse too ere 'tis long."

This horrid stench portends no good,
 And I'd be sweeter if I could !
 But it will spread through Marnock Hall,
 And taint the actions of them all,
 Till love is free and pride does fall !"

XVIII.

These comical talkers céast,
 And the bréezes did mournfully sigh ;

No sound was heard on the dung-hill's breast,
 No sound in the large Pig-Stye.

But still in the Lady's ear

It sounded very queer ;

She raised her hand, she scratched her head,
 And in terrible wrath she snuffled and said,

" Your dung-hills shall sweeten,

Your pigs all be eaten,

Ere Margery sleep in Lord Henry's bed."

XIX.

The Dame rose up from her elbow-chair,

And ran into the hall,

She went in such a hurry there

O'er the gib-cat she nearly did fall ;

Little Billy her son a broom bestrôde,
As the knights stood laughing by,
And merrily round the hall he rode,
Whilst the maidens cryed "Oh fie."

XX.

The Dame she laughed but laughèd within,
For her face wore a terrible frown;
She never did laugh, 'twas a deadly sin,
Nor to smile was she scarce ever known.
She shouted so loud with lungs of leather,
They nearly fell in a heap together;
She called to her from amongst them all,
Her favored knight Sir Billy the tall.

XXI.

A long unshapely thing was he,
An uglier you ne'er did see;
His bony face was lank and lean,
A longer phiz was never seen;
It had been measured once I know
I'll leave you to guess if 'tis true or no,

'Twas a full half yard and an inch to spare,
From the tip of his chin to the root of his hair.
As cunning a thief as ever did swing,
Tho' his knavery may not be shewn;
For he ne'er did meddle with any thing,
Save what was not his own.
In prison, stocks, and pillory,
Full oft he had been seen;
And he only escaped the gallows high,
By his nimble legs I ween.

XXII.

“ Sir Billy, Sir Billy, my valiant knight,
Go hie thee hence this very night;
Nor spare thy legs, till thou reach yon pile,
There seek the Monk of St. Margery's aisle.
Give him a loving kiss from me;
He will not take it amiss from thee,
Tell him the promised hour is come,
When he must look in the conjuror's tomb.

XXIII.

“What he gives thee, I know thou’lt keep;
But see thou dost not into it peep,
For shouldest thou dare in that book to pore,
Thy head will ache for a month or more.”

XXIV.

“O swift I can speed or I had not been here,
And faster than death can I run;
Back I shall come you need not fear,
Ere the jack-daws see the sun.”

XXV.—XXXI.

He ran with mickle might and main;
The beaten path he soon did gain;
And when numerous dangers were o’er and past,
He reached a river’s brink at last,
Whose foam did seem like a washing tub
Wherein the river gods did scrub
Their tawney hides, or faces lave
With river suds brown soap to save.

The abbey, as large as a county jail,
With a spire as small as a barn rat's tail,
Stood nodding and frowning as oft we read,
As if 'twere alive and dreadfully bree'd.*
Sir Billy now smelt the abbey was near,
For a fume came forth from the chimney there,
Which borne along the fragrant breeze,
Did smell like bacon and toasted cheese.
But, when he reached the abbey gate,
The smell was gone and the supper all ate.



Here paused the fiddle, Tom paused too,
He thought some liquor was his due;
For singing of the abbey's cheer,
Bethought him of his can of beer,
He raised the goblet to his lips,
And of its contents more than sips;
A smack he gives then wipes his mouth,
With what had once been a linen cloth,

* Bree'd, frightened.

But now a substance quite unique,
It seemed a curious rare antique,
And might have graced a large museum,
A study, or an Athenæum :
It would defy a connoisseur,
With spectacles on nose I'm sure,
To guess from whence it sprung or came,
Whether from water, earth, or flame !

But whilst our fiddler rests a while,
The tedious moments to beguile,
Let us on fancy's pinions soar,
And view this *morceau* dropped before
A naturalist's wonder-working eyes ;
How eagerly he grasps the prize ;
He views it round with careful touch,
What it can be he marvels much ;
Then scampers home elate with hope,
And views it with a microscope :
In vain he pores amongst the nast,
He's forced to give it up at last ;

But in the next month's magazine,
A drawing of it there is seen,
With thoughts and notes, and illustrations,
And hints profound with explanations.—
At this strange news a gaping host,
Doctors and parsons by th' next post,
Set off to view the precious prize,
Which for their close inspection lies.
After a week's deliberation,
As if the safety of the nation
Depended on this consultation,
They all pronounce it now to be,
(Genius ne'er was born to see)
With solemn looks and language queer,
“*A non-descript from nobody knows where.*”

A model of it now is made,
'Fore a society 'tis laid,
Where each grave member in his face
Does all his skill and learning place.

The meeting's opened from the chair,
Each one with solemn voice and air,
Proceeds to give his thoughts profound,
Whether above or underground,
This rare production lives or grows,
Or whether it be the tail or nose
Of some strange animal unknown,
Or whether before the flood 'twas grown.

They argue long with equal skill,
They can't agree say what they will,
Till from the chair—but hold awhile,
Or fancy perhaps may soar so high,
I can't return, then up I fly
And lose the tale I first began,
I'd best steer backwards whilst I can;
And leave the reader now to view
This learned and sagacious crew;
And he may fancy if he please,
Safe under patent locks and keys,
In some rich cabinet 'tis placed;
Or with it some museum's graced,

Or in a naturalist's green bag
Lies Tom the fiddler's pocket rag.

My red-faced hero has blown his nose,
Rosined his stick, and wiped his clothes,
His throat is moist, his pipes are clear,
The rest they now much long to hear.
Encouraged thus, the fiddling man,
After a hem, again began.

THE
L A Y
OF
THE POOR FIDDLER.

CANTO SECOND.

THE POOR FIDLER.

PART SECOND.

THE

LAY OF THE POOR FIDDLER.

CANTO SECOND.

I.

IF thou would'st view St. Margery right,
 Go visit her by candle light;
 For if thou dost chance to see her by day,
 Thou'lt swear she's turning monstrous grey!
 When the broken windows let in no light,
 And all is dark as a dungeon quite;
 When e'en by the light of a lamp or candle
 Thou scarce can'st find either door or handle;
 When Hodge returns with stable key,
 And whistles to drive his fear away;

When the owl in his great wisdom cries
Whoo-oo, then shuts his learned eyes;
When the maiden steals towards the garden-gate
Where her lover dear in fear doth wait;
When every body sleeps but thou,
And the chill damp gathers on thy brow,
Then go—but take no woman there— (hear;
The charm would break if a voice thou should'st
And home returning thou mayest swear,
Never so stiff stood up thy hair!!!

II.

Short stay I wot did Sir Billy make here;
He'd rather have seen an ale-house near
Than the beautiful pile of St. Margery,
Which he cared not if he ne'er did see.
With an oaken cudgel he pummelled hard
Against the door,—for it was barred.
A friar came hobbling unto the gate,
With gouty foot and shining pate—
“Who knocks?” cried he, as plain as he could;
For he just was eating something good;

And the half-chew'd morsel stuck in his throat,
As he wiped his mouth with his dark grey-coat.
“ From Marnock I come,” Sir Billy cried ;
And straight he stood by the friar's side ;
For many a hot potatoe pie,
Had the Ladye sent to St. Margery.

III.

Sir Billy's message soon was said ;
The friar bent his large round head ;
His body turned, then seized a light,
And waddled on before our knight ;
His broad big belly a shadow cast
The breadth of th' passages they past ;
Sir Billy thus as you may find,
In utter darkness trudged behind ;
Till the friar a door did open wide,
And squeezed in all on one side,
The knight then bent his lofty head,
And stood by the monk of St. Margery's bed.

IV.

“The Dame of Marnock sends thee a kiss,
And hopes thou wilt not take it amiss;

She says the promised hour is come
When we must open the conjurer’s tomb.”—

From off his bed the monk did roll,
And wildly stared as he sat on the floor;

He scratched,—then lifted his garments so foul;

His tawney skin was wondrous sore.

His little grey eyes gloured full on the knight,

Strange sounds from out his body came;

“And darest thou see adventurous wight

What no vain mortal man may name?

My flesh I’ve scourged with thongs of leather;

I’ve gone without breeches for weeks together;

My back I’ve scrubbed against the pantry wall

Till the stones from off the top did fall;

And all too little to atone

For knowing what should ne’er be known!

Would'st have thy body almost flea'd
With nettles and with adder's-tongue;
Till every venom'd wound does bleed—
Then, come with me yon tombs among."

VI.

"Good man, I see no fun in this;
'Tis not the way I'll rise to bliss;
Prayer know I never one;
Save when I go to steal alone,
And then I mutter out God save me,
And 'grant the hangsmen may not have me;
But I will always take great care,
I never hurt a single hair
Of my own head, 'tis quite in vain,
T' inflict unnecessary pain;
In life we've ills enow to bear,
Without our taking so much care
Ourselves to punish and torment,
'Tis easier far to rest content;
No stripes or blows that can be given,
Will flog our lazy souls to heaven;

So rear thy carcase on one end, *and now to him*
 And onwards now thy footsteps bend." *and now*

VII.—VIII.

The monk he grunted hard with pain,
 And on the floor he might have lain,
 If Billy had not in a flirt, *and now to him*
 Pull'd him up by his *holy* skirt. *and now to him*
 Now slow they march thro' the cloisters cold;
 Strange shapes as they pass the lights unfold,
 The stones were carved so fair and true,
 Each living thing you there might view.

IX.

By a creaking door with hob-nails riven,
 They entered into the chancel wide;
 With strange conceits the roof was driven,
 And each corbell was carved with uncouth pride
 In shapes which seemed put there to try,
 If monkish gravity they might defy.

X.—XI.

Full many a rusty sword and spear,
Shook harmless, o'er each warrior's bier
And made Sir Billy start with fear ;
He thought his latter end was near.
The moon did shine most gloriously ;
Tho' her pale beams you scarce could see ;
You would have thought the windows tall,
To shut out day and night were made ;
Or else some statute had forbade
The use of what was given to all :
The only light you there could view,
A devil's flaming nose came through,
Which Dunstan pinched right well I wot,
With holy zeal and tongs red hot :
The moon-beam kisses the fiery nose,
And a bloody stain on the pavement throws.

XII.

The monk sat down right carefully,
Sir Billy leaned against a stone ;
Thus spake the friar so holily,
With many a heavy sigh and groan.

XIII.

“ In other climes, it was my lot
To meet the famous Simon Scott;
A conjurer of such mighty name,
To distant lands had spread his fame!
He could command the motley crew
Of imps, and devils, to his view;
Could raise high winds, the steeples doff,
Make ladies’ handkerchiefs drop off!
Eat fire, make ribbands out of tow;
Change eggs to apples with a blow;
In short, he knew what I tell thee
As clear and pat as A B C!
Some of this hocus pocus art,
To me long since he did impart;
I could if I would give thee the power
To make the farmer’s milk turn sour;
That terrible word I could say unto thee,
Which calls forth sprites from the Red-sea;
Makes dairy maids sweat at the churn,
Old women’s cheeks and noses burn;
Makes Hodge to scratch, and kick, and fight,
As if ten thousand fleas did bite;

This and more I could say unto thee—
But good Sir Knight it may not be ;
And I have committed a terrible sin,
In thinking of these words again ;
And this poor carcase if I live,
A double scrubbing I must give.

XIV.

“ When Simon on his death-bed fell,
He wished for peace with heaven and hell ;
He called on me, his voice I did hear,
An hundred leagues and I quaked for fear ;
I rode on the back of a water sprite,
And by his bed side I stood ere night.

XV.

“ I swore his terrible book to hide,
In his own grave close by his side ;
That no living thing might therein look,
Save the Dame who oft his cause had took ;
I buried him and his book together,
When the moon shone bright in harvest weather ;

That the burning nose might o'er him wave,
And scare Old Nick from the conjurer's grave.

XVI.—XVII.

“ Sir Billy look ! the Devil's nose
A fiery mark on the pavement throws ;
'Twas there I buried master Simon ;
Go fetch that crow, we soon must hie man :
That stone thou must lift, but have a care,
Or it will soon be too hot to bear.”

XVIII.

Many a blow Sir Billy gave,
And oft he punched at old Simon's grave,
Before the stone would stir a jot,
And now it grew most wondrous hot.
At last with many a luch and heave,
He stuck his nose in the conjurer's grave !
I wish you had been there to smell
The horrid stench, he snuffed so well ;
You never again, your nose would thrust
In other folk's affairs I trust ;

No other smell I'm sure could ere
With this vile farrago compare!—
Sir Billy sputtered and held his nose,
And quickly wrapped it in his clothes.

XIX.

Before their eyes old Simon lay,
He might not have been dead a day ;
A tattered blanket wrapped him round,
With a leathern girdle it was bound ;
In his hand he held the mighty book,
Wherein the Lady wished to look.

XX.

The monk he prayed both loud and long ;
But fear had stopt Sir Billy's tongue ;
A thieving often he had been,
At dead of night alone I ween,
And never felt remorse or awe ;
But when old Simon's corse he saw,
His teeth did chatter in his head,
His hair stood upright it is said ;

And if his legs he could have found,
He would have scampered off that ground ;
But fear had bound him fast to thr' spot,
He fancied he was going to pot !

XXI.

When fervently the monk had prayed,
He thus to trembling Billy said :—
“ Thou must go pull old Simon's ears,
Before he'll loose the book he bears ;
Make haste and do thy errand well,
Or, we perhaps may rue this spell.”—
Sir Billy now was hard put to it ;
Quite sure he felt he ne'er could do it ;
“ To hold my nose, ring Simon's ears,
And take the mighty book he bears,
Will at the least four hands require ;
I've but a couple like my sire ;
My nose I must unguarded leave,
If that large book I would receive ;
But how must I the smell avoid,
I never can again abide

That strange effluvia, so dire—
A child that's burnt oft dreads the fire."—
But no alternative appears,
The smell must be endured he fears ;
And lifting up his haggard eyes,
For help and strength aloud he cries—
Then in he jumps, with wild despair ;
He holds his breath—he grasps one ear—
But lo, 'tis gone ! the stinking charm
Dispels and frees his nose from harm.
Simon's long ears, and snout he rings,
The book he snatches, up he springs ;
He thought, as he leaped, again he felt
Th' aforesaid—'twas not the corse that smelt—
For Simon now was sweet again,
As if in the earth he ne'er had lain.

XXII.—XXIII.

"Now run straight home," the father cried,
And hide that mighty book by thy side,
And may St. Dunstan, St. Peter, and Paul,
Forget what we've done this night in the hall !"

The monk returned and when morning arose,
He scrubbed his breech for his soul's repose!

XXIV.

Sir Billy breathed free when the gates were past,
And he reached the river's brink At last ;
This soon was crossed, he scampered away,
And the castle saw ere break of day.

XXV.—XXVI.

Why so early does Margery rise,

When late in the morning she used to lie ;

And her garters, to her great surprize,

Why does she now forget to tie ;

Why on the staircase does she stop,

And hastily look around ;

Why does she scratch and fondle Mop,

As he starts at the sudden sound ;

And, though she steals o'er the castle ground,

Why does not the watchman's bugle sound.

XXVII.

Margery stops and looks around,
Lest her mother should hear her footsteps sound ;
Mop's ears she scratches, lest his voice
Should wake the castle in a trice ;
The watchman does not blow his horn,
For in his house was Margery born ;
And she skips thro' the wood in the morning air,
To see Lord Henry, her sweetheart there.

XXVIII.—XXX.

Henry and Margery are sat,
Beneath a spreading bough ;
A prettier pair sure never met,
So sweet to bill and coo.
I will not tell these soft delights ;
Nor sing of Cupid's sacred rights ;
My days of love, are long since o'er,
I'm verging fast towards three score.

XXXI.

Under a spreading elder tree,
A dwarf lay down to sleep;
An ill-favored wight as ere you could see,
For a noble lord to keep.
Old women said he was a sprite,
On mischief and on evil bent;
Young ones were sure no earthly wight,
So lean and ugly ere was sent;
'Twas said when Lord Henry a hunting did go
Through brakes, woods, and briars alone;
He heard a shrill voice cry, "Oh! Oh! Oh!"
And it made a most grievous moan;
When all on a sudden this comical thing
Leaped out from a holly bush;
Lord Henry's horse gave a terrible spring,
And threw him into a slush;
He was sorely frightened you may guess,
When he saw this elvish sprite;
In a hurry he mounted nor slackened his pace:
Till the castle was in sight:

But the dwarf outran his bonny brown steed,
And soon to the stable his horse did lead.

XXXII.—XXXIII.

We cease to wonder it is said,
At what we oft do see ;
This comical dwarf with Lord Henry's stayed,
Nor offered once to flee :
His head was large as a washing tub,
His hair was long and sandy ;
His cheeks nearly hid his nose so snub,
And his legs were short and bandy :
Oft in a corner he would go
And yelping loud, cry, " Oh ! Oh ! Oh !"
He was right crafty, arch and wild,
He seldom laughed nor often smiled :
But Lord Henry liked his service well,
Tho' of his feats I may not tell.

XXXIV.

And now, in the wood he jumps from his bed,
And beckons the lovers to flee ;

A noise afar off he hears, 'tis said,
And through the dark mist he can see.
Margery ran thro' the hawthorn glade,
Her stockings were down to her heels;
Dares not to stop the startled maid,
Tho' the prickly thorns she feels;
Lord Hal. in a hurry bestrode his mare,
The dwarf beside him ran;
He soon lost sight of the green wood so fair,
And sighed like a love-sick man.

While Tommy thus bawled out his tale,
His fiddle-stick began to fail;
He faltering stopped, and looked around;
A tankard with bright liquor crowned
Stood foaming at his side;
He did not wish good stuff to spoil,
He grasped the cup, then paused awhile,
And oped his mouth full wide;
The foam blown off, the juice he quaffed,
And smacked his lips right heartily;

The Ladye turned around and laughed,
And her shoulders shook with glee.
A fire now lighted Tommy's eye,
Which glistened bright with extacy.
Th' enlivening draught of good October,
Had not conspired to make him sober ;
The tortured cat-gut loudly rang,
Whilst Tommy thus still louder sang.

...the first of these was the ...
...the second ...
...the third ...
...the fourth ...
...the fifth ...
...the sixth ...
...the seventh ...
...the eighth ...
...the ninth ...
...the tenth ...

...the eleventh ...
...the twelfth ...
...the thirteenth ...
...the fourteenth ...
...the fifteenth ...
...the sixteenth ...
...the seventeenth ...
...the eighteenth ...
...the nineteenth ...
...the twentieth ...
...the twenty-first ...
...the twenty-second ...
...the twenty-third ...
...the twenty-fourth ...
...the twenty-fifth ...
...the twenty-sixth ...
...the twenty-seventh ...
...the twenty-eighth ...
...the twenty-ninth ...
...the thirtieth ...

THE
L A Y
OF
THE POOR FIDDLER.

CANTO THIRD.

THE
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LAY OF THE POOR FIDDLER.

CANTO THIRD.



I.

AND said I that my throat was dry;
And said I that no cheer was nigh,
And that all giving souls were dead,
And that the good to heaven were fled.
And that I ne'er should put my nose,
 Again into a tankard's brim;
And that I ne'er again should dose,
 Before an ale-house hearth so grim?
How could I fancy such mishap,
Would e'er fall from Dame Fortune's lap,
On me the happiest of mankind,
The merriest mortal you may find!

H

II.

In peace, malt liquor's cheap and good ;
In war, 'tis poor and badly brew'd ;
In kitchens, now they drink small beer ;
Malt, hops, and water, grow so dear.
Good liquor rules both church and state,
It brightens many a stupid pate ;
And men, and saints, to my own thinking ;
Are often prone unto hard drinking.
Heaven, we are told, through a glass is seen ;
A glass of grog is what they mean.

III.

So thought Lord Henry, I dare say,
As he rode through a dusty way ;
For talking fast, and looking sly,
Had made his lordship very dry.
But the Dwarf shouted out hollo !—
And scarce his nobstick he could rear,
When running fast as he could go,
A knight half-breathless did appear.

His hat he used instead of a fan,
His face was like to a lobster boiled ;
Whilst the pearly drop from his long chin ran,
And his clothes with dust were nearly spoiled.
Now can you ken this half-broiled wight ?—
It was Sir Billy that valiant knight.

IV.

I'll warrant he wished he had faster ran,
When he saw Lord Henry appear ;
For his iron attire, he had left by the fire,
And a cudgel was all he had there.
The words were many loud and long
With oaths by far the greater share ;
No waiting man or woman's tongue,
Could have outdone the rattle there.

V.

At last Sir Billy dealt a knock
On Henry's scone so noble ;
The rude and unexpected shock,
Had nearly bent him double ;

But happily for him, his head
Received the lusty blow ;
For had it lower been 'tis said,
It would have laid him low !

VI.

Lord Henry stooped, and wisely thought,
The head was oft the hardest part ;
So with his stick, he slyly sought
The nearest place to Billy's heart.
This proved far softer, soon he lay
Sprawling and kicking on the ground ;
Another word he did not say,
But soon appeared in sleep profound.

VII.

When Henry saw Sir Billy lie,
He thought it a shocking thing to die ;
He called for Gilpin in a hurry,
To come, this good Sir Knight to lurry ;
He bade him staunch the bleeding wound,
And bear him thence to the castle ground.

VIII.

Away Lord Henry galloped fast,
O'er hill and winding dale ;
Nor halted e'en his spittle to cast,
Till he spied his native vale.
The Dwarf behind his master staid,
To do his high command ;
His always did what Lord Henry bade,
For he liked not his heavy hand.
He felt in Sir Billy's pocket so light,
But little found he there ;
He unbuttoned his coat and saw a sight,
A sight which made him stare.
A heavy book was under it placed,
And he marvelled much to see
A knight's gay doublet thus should be graced,
A knight of such high degree :
He brought it forth from its hiding place,
And forgot to staunch the wound ;
Some secret he thought was in the case,
Which he would not rest till he found.

IX.

Between the leaves his long fingers he stuck,
But a terrible squeeze got he ;
He howled, and cursed the mighty book,
Whose secrets he wished to see :
He did not stay again to thrust
His fingers into the trap ;
But kicked it amongst the rolling dust,
When he got a swinging slap ;
He put his hand to the smarting place,
And yelp'd and ran away :
Resolved no more that book to face,
Till a more convenient day ;
But he chuckled and laughed at a mischievous
thought,
As he looked on the winking knight ;
Sir Billy's long fingers he vowed should be caught,
For putting him in such a fright :
To the book Gilpin dragged him (he was not dead)
And thrust his fingers in ;
When lo ! the volume wide did spread,
And his fingers slipped within ;

The dwarf with eager looks now named,
The contents of a spell ;
It was by potent magic framed,
But the words I may not tell :
It would make a hut, seem a stately hall ;
A palace, a barn to appear ;
A dwarf to seem as a giant tall,
Or a wand to seem a spear ;
Old folk seem young and young seem old—
All was delusion that it told.

X.

He then did turn to another spell,
But the writing appeared so small ;
His head he poked nearer to read it well,
When a sudden mishap did befall ;
The handle to his ugly face,
Now proved the worst of foes ;
For the book did shut in that very place,
And caught him by the nose :

In vain he pulled, the book still hung,

Dangling from his long snout ;

He danced, he capered, and he sung ;

And loud for help did shout.

At last with good Sir Billy's aid,

From this disaster he was freed :

But he hid the book, resolved in heart,

Some other nose should feel the smart.

XI.

He threw Sir Billy on his back ;

Grumbling loud at the heavy load ;

He thought to tie him in a sack,

And toss him into the foaming flood.

But he Lord Henry's wrath did fear,

So to the castle soon did bear

His load, and by that magic spell,

Quite through the hall as I've heard tell,

Did pass unknown to any there.

He pinched the legs of each sleeping knight,

When each awoke, and loud did swear,

The fleas most horridly did bite !

To the turret high Sir Billy he bore,
And—but the Ladye was in bed,
And the door might not be opened,
He had laid him on her chamber-floor:—
He flung him quickly on the ground,
And his hollow head did loudly sound.

XII.

As he came through the inner yard,
He saw little Neddy was striving hard
From off the high embattled wall,
To reach his wandering tennis-ball;
Friend Gilpin thought to have some fun.
He threw the child a wooden gun;
And gingerbread, and currant cakes,
From out his dirty pocket takes;
A pedlar he seems to the urchin's sight,
With basket well stored, and apron so white.
He soon enticed the child away,
And far from home he long did stray—
The watch from off the ramparts high
Saw two large gib-cats passing by.

XIII.

Gilpin led him a weary round,
 Tho' still he seemed near the castle ground;
 Till crossing o'er a murmuring brook,
 The dwarf his own foul visage took,
 Could he have had his wicked will,
 He would have done the child some ill:
 But he feared the Dame's o'erpowering blows,
 And still he felt his smarting nose:
 So he made a wry face at the startled child,
 And off he ran thro' the forest wild;
 Like an arrow from out the hunters bow,
 He flew and shouted, "Oh! Oh! Oh!"

XIV.

Poor Teddy was right sore afraid,
 And on the ground he crying laid;
 But when at length he sought his home,
 Still farther from it he did roam.—
 Scaree durst he look aside, for fear
 That wry face should again appear;

His little heart did heave and throb,
With many a heavy sigh and sob :
At last quite spent, his face he did hide,
And laid him on the grass and cried.

XV.—XVIII.

A snarling cur came barking near,
Behind two soldiers did appear;
Poor Ned they seized, and off they bore,
Though he did scratch, and kick, and roar;

He struggled long in vain I wot,

To gain his liberty—

“Now we a noble youth have got,

Brave comrade thou mayest see.”—

XIX.

The child then said, “his mammy would come,

If they did not let him go ;

And Betty the nurse would be there very soon,

And box them to and fro :

“ And I will shoot you with my bow,

And with my arrows bright ;

For they will come from Marnock I know,
Before this very night!"—

XX.

"Great thanks, for all these promises,
My pretty little boy;
But thou must come with us I guess,
In spite of this annoy.
For if thou dost from Marnock stray,
'Thou'lt not return this many a day."

XXI.

Although little Neddy was gone away,
Yet still in the castle he seemed to stay,
For Gilpin acted well his part;
The feat performed by magic art;
And in the form of the absent boy,
He much the castle did annoy.
The knights he pinched black, blue, and red,
The squires legs he did tie;
Then up their noses thrust 'tis said,
Scotch snuff whilst asleep they did lie.

To Betty he seemed a three legged stool,

In haste she squatted down;

From under popped this mischievous tool,

And she almost broke her crown.

As long legged Sam, on his shoulders bore

A heavy load of straw;

This elf from out the castle door,

The laden bonds-man saw:

Behind, with a lighted match he stole,

And thrust it in with glee;

The straw soon blazed,

Sam fled amazed,

And the maidens laughed right heartily.

But I can neither sing nor say,

The mischief that was done;

'Twould take me till the dawn of day,

Before I had well begun.

Many at last in the castle guessed,

Young Neddy was by some fiend possessed!

XXII—XXIII.

If the Dame had seen him well I guess,

She would have stripped him of his dress;

But she was busy with Sir Billy,
He looked indeed most woeful silly.
Much she did marvel that he sat,
Beside her chamber door so squat;
He was alive, for loud he groaned;
The Dame quite sympathetic moaned;
She thought perhaps in the book he had read,
And that his scanty wits were fled;
But soon the cudgel's blow she found,
And with magical words she staunch'd the wound
She laid him on her own soft bed,
And with her hands he was clothed and fed !

XXIV.

So passed that day—the evening came,
It always does—though not the same;
The shepherd had brought home his flock,
And it was nearly—twelve o'clock !
Yet Margery still at her window sat,
Alas ! she was uncommon flat ;
Sometimes she sighed, then hummed a tune,
And blew her nose, and looked at th' moon ;

Then idly swung in a rocking-chair;
To soothe her bosom's anxious care,
And oft she sought with vacant stare,
The Dragon's Tail or Northern Bear.

XXXV.

Is yon a star, that shines so bright,
That seems like a bonfire's wavering light?
Is yon red flame the western star?—
No, 'tis the blazing beam of war!
Scarce could she breathe in her tightened stays,
For well she knew the war-fire's blaze!

XXXVI.

The watchman viewed the distant light,
He blew his trumpet in a fright,
The sound awoke each drowsy knight—
The squires did rub their twinkling eyes,
And wriggling, strove in vain to rise;
For you no doubt remember well
The goblin Dwarf's mischievous spell.

All round the bustling yard were seen,
Half naked men, with maids I ween ;
Scampering about in wild amaze,
Wondering at the distant blaze.

XXVII.—XXXI.

At length with each others clothes arrayed,
They strive to do as they are bade ;
The motley crew—ride, run, and walk,
To warn the stupid country folk,
And bid them come to Marnock hall,
And fight, and talk, and drink, and bawl.
So passed this fearful night away,
And soon appeared the dawn of day.

The fiddler ceased—the listening throng
Applauded much Tom's voice and song ;
They wonder he should be so poor,
With such rare talents, and were sure

For parish clerk, or auctioneer,
He was well fitted, and would bear
The stamp of office in his face;
Nor would it church or state disgrace.
Had he no friend—no wife to share his room,
“Ay, once he had”—Tom’s face began to gloom,
“But she is dead”—it brightened up again,
“And of her absence I am hearty fain.”—
Upon the strings his fingers thrummed,
A country dance unconscious hummed,
And busy memory did recall,
The daily strife, and nightly brawl,
Once he was doomed to listen to;
But now released from noisy Sue,
He roamed abroad at liberty,
Nor wished again those days to see.
After due pause, when he had baited,*
He recollected that they waited;
And thus in solemn tones began,
So soft and slow the fiddling man.

* Bait, to get refreshment.

CHAPTER I. THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA. The first discovery of America was made by Christopher Columbus in 1492. He sailed from Spain in search of a westward route to India, and instead discovered the New World.

CHAPTER II. THE EARLY SETTLEMENTS. The first permanent European settlements in North America were founded by the Spanish in the 16th century. These included St. Augustine in Florida and Mexico City.

CHAPTER III. THE ENGLISH SETTLEMENTS. The first English settlement in North America was Jamestown, founded in 1607. It was the first permanent English colony in the New World.

CHAPTER IV. THE PURITAN SETTLEMENTS. The Puritans, a group of English Protestants, founded the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630. They sought to create a society based on their religious beliefs.

CHAPTER V. THE FRENCH SETTLEMENTS. The French established several colonies in North America, including Quebec in 1608. They were primarily interested in the fur trade.

CHAPTER VI. THE SPANISH SETTLEMENTS. The Spanish established a vast empire in North America, including Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. They were interested in gold and silver.

CHAPTER VII. THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION. The American Revolution began in 1775 and ended in 1783. It was a war for independence from British rule, resulting in the birth of the United States.

THE
L A Y
OF
THE POOR FIDDLER.

CANTO FOURTH.

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THE
LAY OF THE POOR FIDDLER.

CANTO FOURTH.



I.—II.

SWEET land of cakes ! thy sons no more
Bear armour on their lusty backs ;
They wander now from door to door,
Laden instead with travelling packs !
Where'er you go by dale or hill,
You'll find them journeying southwards still.

III.

Now the hurly-burly spreads,
The frightened peasants leave their styes ;
To hide and save their precious heads,
Within the castle's ample size.

Old women groan, the maidens cry,
And screaming, with the men they fly ;
Whilst some more valiant seize a spade,
And swear it shall on their backs be laid—
The maidens then let fall a tear,
And wipe their eyes, and cry—Oh, dear !

IV.—VI.

Now to the hall a sturdy wight,
With wife and bairns, in strange affright
Comes hurrying in, and stammers out,
How that a concourse of about
Five hundred women, men, and boys,
And soldiers too, had by surprize,
His pig-stye taken, and would soon,
To the castle come they said ere noon !

VII.—XII.

Then scouts with cheeks as white as flour,
Return and say—“ Within an hour
Eight hundred English will be here,
And take us all we much do fear ;

Oh that we never a stealing had gone,
They'll hang us every mother's son."
Meantime full many a vassal came,
T' assist and guard the noble Dame.
There was clattering of axes and spades,
There was running and scuttering fast ;
There were dung-forks, and scythes, and knife-
blades,
And cudgels right fierce high in air were tost.

XIII.

The Dame she looked at the terrified band
Who ran for refuge to the hall ;
She thought to make a desperate stand,
And her captain should be Sir Billy the Tall :
She called for Neddy her son to attend,
That he might learn to fight ;
" I'm sure a helping hand he can lend ;
I saw him fire a gun last night ;
'T was just when I was going to bed,
The shot killed a sparrow on yonder wall ;
'The deuce is in't if an English head,
Is not larger than a bird so small."—

XIV.

Well you may guess, that Gilpin wished
T' escape from this great enterprize;
For well he knew that he was dished,
If the Dame on him then placed her eyes.
He bit and scratched, and roared, and cried,
And oped his mouth so mighty wide,
They thought his senses sure were fled,
And to the Dame with haste they sped.
She waxed wroth this news to hear,
And said it seemed to her most queer
That Neddy once so bold and brave,
Should prove so cowardly a slave:—
“Go whip him well! and pack him off;
I'll never more the recreant see,
Hence with the monkey to Clan-Tuff;—
And thou shalt take him Jemmy Magee.”

XV.

A terrible job of it Jemmy had,
To take the roaring blubbering lad.
Soon as the horse heard Gilpin wail,
He snorted loud and whisked his tail;

But when the elf was fairly on,
Dear how he kicked and backwards run;
It cost poor Jemmy a pint of sweat
To get him past the castle gate;
And 't was with mickle pain and toil,
He got him on perhaps a mile ;

When as o'er a stream they go ;

Amid the brook he changed his shape,

And ran and shouted, " Oh ! Oh ! Oh ! "

Which made young Jemmy stare and gape

Full fast the urchin ran alone,

But faster still a boother stone *

Flew swift from Jemmy's upraised hand,

And laid him yelling on the sand.

Jemmy returned in a desperate fright,

Right sore amaz'd at the wonderful sight.

XVI.—XIX.

Soon did he reach the spreading wood,

In which the stately castle stood ;

And now he hears th' approaching foe,

Marching as fast as they can go.

* A large pebble stone used for mending roads.

Shrill voices echo from around,
And drums and bag-pipes loudly sound ;
He heard their very horses prance,
And captains give the marching word ;
He viewed the upraised spear and lance,
And saw the glittering of each sword :
The constables he now saw too,
They were most terrible to view !

XX.—XXI.

Now anxiously each English face,
Did turn towards their halting place ;
So near they were that they might hear
The people shout for ale and beer,
And bairns and women cry “ Oh dear ! ”
On every wall stood men and boys,
With broken pots and stones and noise,
To frighten off the Englishmen,
And send them scampering back again :
The knights and squires had each a sword,
The Dame stood by to give the word.—
While yet they look, the gate unlocks
An aged man with snowy locks,

Peeps first, then opes, and marches out,
To ask them what they are about—
The English knights now sped away,
To hear what this old man should say.

XXII.

“Soldiers, our mighty Dame demands,
Why ye do come into her lands,
With clamour and intent malicious,
She wonders you can be so vicious ;
And wishes you'll go back again,
Or else she soon will make you fain
T' escape with half your limbs and lives,
And send you limping to your wives.”

XXIII.

Now into a passion the English lord brake,
But the captain bowed and coolly spake :—
“If your Dame will ascend on the castle wall,
We quickly will tell why we now enthrall
This stately mansion, and will shew
When backwards we intend to go.”—

The message sent, the Dame appeared,
 And every one his head upreared—
 A soldier now stepped forth on high,
 And in his hand he led a boy—
 Oh how the Dame did frown and stare;
 For it was Neddy her son and heir,
 An awkward bow the soldier made,
 Then touched his cap, and thus he said—

XXIV.

“ Lady, we do not wish to fight,
 We only want that which is right;
 But yet we must not see your knights
 Plunder and steal, and those lewd wights,
 Your squires, our maidens rob and spoil,
 ’T would make a hermit’s blood to boil;
 It looks not well, that you receive
 Into your keeping, me believe,
 These rogues, who well deserve a stripping,
 And at cart-tail a good sound whipping.
 The greatest rogue from amongst them all,
 We now demand, Sir Billy the Tall,

That he may swing most loftily :
It was but last St. Barnaby ;
He stole Dame Filch's ducks and poultry ;
Drove all her cattle from the pen,
And brought them here 'tis said, and then
He almost killed Dick Dobbin's brother,
Who caught him rifling his mother :
Therefore give up this thief, and we
Before an hour, far hence will be ;
Or else this boy to London led,
A chimney-sweeper shall be bred."—

XXV.

He ceased—and Neddy loudly cried,
And stretched his little arms full wide ;
He shouted hard for Betty to come
With the birch-rod, and whip them home :
Then piteously again he cried,
When he did find his boon denied—
The Dame now felt a sudden thrill
Of soft emotion check her will ;
She sighed alas, and looked around,
But there no pitying eye was found :

She strove to hide within her breast,
A mother's anguish, and addressed
Her smiling foes, with dauntless air,
As if for them she did not care:—

XXVI.

“Great warriors who do raise your swords,
’Gainst boys and women, I scorn your words;
Sir Billy, it shall ne’er be said
Through me was to the gallows led;
So if you wish your heads to save,
Employ your heels, or find a grave—
But if you choose, Sir Billy will
His honor prove, as well as skill,
By fighting singly Dicky’s brother,
Who longs I know to make a bothier.”

XXVII.

She looked around, with fear and pride—
A noisy hum spread far and wide;
Some wished the Dame’s advice to take,
Nor place their carcasses at stake;

While some with valour piping hot,
 Would fight it out with musket-shot,
 At last when words had got to blows,
 And each had shewn his bloody nose,
 A man half-breathless came in sight,
 Running post haste with sore affright.

XXVIII.

“ Ah ! comrades true ! what seek ye here ?
 Make haste, or else I’m much in fear
 You’ll find a job,—for in your rear
 A ragged roaring crew are near;
 Women and men, with sticks and stones,
 Dung-forks, and shovels, and jaw-bones;
 Do swear they’ll make you rue the day,
 That you came tramping on this way.”

XXIX.—XXXII.

This put a stop to all the broil,
 And they were glad to rest a while,
 And send word to the Dame right soon,
 They would accept her proffered boon ;

And with stout cudgels they should fight,
When morning ushered in the light.
He who received th' first broken head,
Should be pronounced vanquished ;
If Billy first received the blow,
Then little Ned away should go
(Her Ladyship's high presence saving,)
An hostage for her good behaving ;
But if Sir Billy's cudgel gave
The first rude knock, with lifted stave,
The boy should be again restored,
Without another angry word ;
And they would march from Marnock strait,
Nor for another parley wait.

XXXIII.

These terms did please each valiant knight,
And soon 't was settled for the fight,
When Billy should his gudgel wave,
And Neddy either lose or save.

XXXIV.

I know that many poets say,

And these do mock my humble lay,

Such fights with pistols should be made ;

But I do scorn a murderer's song,

And hope to see the time ere long,

When in a gaol they shall be laid,

Who dare encourage such proceeding,

And call it honor and good breeding ;

When murder and such horrid work,

Ne'er under honor's mask shall lurk !



He paused :—and every voice again

Approved Tom's laughter moving strain,

And sideways leering they did wonder,—

How he without a stop or blunder,—

Could sing so well of deeds long past,

And hoped his song would longer last—

The fiddler smiled, well pleased no doubt,
That they his merits had found out;
They were the first he soundly swore,
No one had ever thought before
They were worth listening to, and oft
The country lowns at them had laughed :
Tom drank, then smiled, his fiddle raised,
Well pleased to hear his song thus praised.

THE
L A Y
OF
THE POOR FIDDLER.

CANTO FIFTH.

THE
LAY OF THE POOR FIDDLER.

CANTO FIFTH.

I.—II.

Call it not false :—they do not lie,
Who say, a poet's worth's not found,
Till he for ever hence shall fly,
And lay his body in the ground.

Who say, the world will never prize,
The good that's easily obtained :
Till far beyond their reach it lies,
Its value then is ascertained.

Thus man his choicest blessings slights,
And scorns what's easily received ;
But if some blast the blossom blights,
Its worth too late is then perceived,

III.—IV.

Scarce were the terms of truce agreed,
When they descried, marching with speed
And gesture strange, with horrid noise,
A crew of women, men, and boys ;
Near they approached, and hallooing loud,
They spurned the ground, and raised a cloud
Of rolling dust, which as they tossed,
Sometimes they were half seen, half lost,
Sometimes the screen would roll away,
And every motley form display ;
Then swift again the whirling clouds,
Would meet and hide the approaching crowds.

V.

Now knights and squires were sore displeased
They had not stayed, or they'd have squeezed
The Englishmen, but 'twas too late,
Th' approaching morrow they must wait—
So messages were quickly sent,
To shew how much for their intent,
They were right pleased, yet vexed they said,
'They could not take their proffered aid ;

But hoped they 'd taste the castle cheer,
And swig with them a can of beer,
And stay and view the coming fight,
And they might sleep i'th' barn all night.

VI.—VIII.

Each hero, and each heroine,
Agreed to take the proffered cheer ;
And nought was heard save mirthful din,
Loudly re-echoing from within,
And each his neighbour scarce could hear.
For thus was spent that fearful day,
In revelry and joy ;
Which threatened once a sad affray,
And many a streaming eye !

IX.

And now the fair ones sunk to sleep,
The men soon after them did creep ;
The barn was filled, all were content,
And to the earth each head was bent :
No sound was heard, save the loud snore
Which seemed to shake the very floor,

And loud proclaimed that balmy sleep,
Its influence over them did keep.

X.

Margery scarce her eyes had closed,

Before the morning light ;

All night she neither slept or doted,

For love had put sweet sleep to flight ;

And thinking of her love and woes,

She tumbling and tossing lay ;

But soon arose and donned her clothes,

Before the dawn of day.

XI.

She looked into the castle yard,

Which under her window lay ;

Where swearing loud and drinking hard,

The men sat yesterday ;

'T was gloomy now, and quite deserted,—

But hark ! she hears waste spittle squirted,—

Who can it be that walks so soon,

Beneath her window in the gloom ;

A man appears—his head he raises,
Margery starts, with fears she gazes ;
She dares not speak—but can it be
Her own dear Lord,—yes it is he !
Oh how she feared lest he should wake
Her mother's slumbers, or should break
His legs, or neck, in getting in—
To let him come would be no sin !
Soon he sprung through the chamber door,
And kissed her sweet face o'er and o'er.

XII.—XIII.

You now will marvel much I know,
That he could thus so safely go
 Into the castle yard ;
Where watchmen pace the turrets high,
And knights in armour bright do lie,
 And gates and doors are barred.
But if you possess a decent head,
You'll remember the charm which Gilpin read ;

This to Lord Henry he told,
And he did seem a milk-maid stout,
Pacing the Castle yard about,

With haughty step and bold.
But love saw through this quaint disguise,
For love is often mighty wise,
And Margery knew her lover dear,
Soon as her window he came near.—
But now I'll leave her with her knight,
And tell you of the coming fight.

XIV.—XV.

The Dame meanwhile, was anxious to know
How Billy felt, from his deadly blow ;
A charm was applied, but she was not quite sure
Whether or no his wound it would cure :
And now the time grew very near,
She quaked and sighing felt quite queer ;
The gaping crowds more numerous grew,
And Dick's great brother's cudgel flew ;
The trumpets sounded for the strife,
And all for mischief now were rife—

When lo ! Sir Billy stalking came,
Quite fresh he seemed and free from pain ;
In his best suit he was equipped,
Though some few stitches were unripped ;
Proudly he stood, his cudgel waved,
And Sawney to the combat braved.

XVI.—XIX.

The Dame and Margery are sat,
Each combatant has doffed his hat,

And scraped his shoe ;

The knights behind the Dame did stand,
Each held a crab-stick in his hand,

Each squire came too.

XX.

The signal given—the warriors close,
And ne'er were heard such mighty blows ;
Each one did seem as if 't would send
A body to its latter end ;
For long the strife was held I ween,
Such fighting ne'er but once was seen !

XXI.

It would not please your pretty ears,
 Ye tender ladies, well I know,
 It would but raise your anxious fears,
 And bid the briny tears to flow ;
 Or I could tell how to each head,
 The lusty cudgels often sped ;
 And how they back again rebounded,
 Nor e'en their pericranium's wounded ;
 And I could tell how every knock
 Would soon have fell'd an ox to th' block ;
 But I'll not show my moving parts,
 Nor hurt your sweet and tender hearts.

XXII.—XXIII.

'Tis broke, 'tis broke ! poor Sawney's scone
 Has proved the softest now for once ;
 He staggers, and aside he reels,—
 He falls—he groans—and kicks his heels !
 Haste, fetch a plaister and some rum,
 And send for Dr. Slop to come.
 Ah ! Sawney thou mayest fret and moan,
 Thy fame is now for ever gone ;

No more at cudgels wilt thou play;
For thou'lt bethink thee of this day;
Each one will hiss thee when they know,
Thy head's not proof against a blow!

XXIV.

As if his head was broken too,
The champion seemed, nor claimed his due,

But silent he did stand;
His oaken stick he did not wave,
Nor heard the shouts of brave, O brave!

Nor marked each outstretched hand;
When lo! the females screamed aloud,
Their faces hid, and all the crowd

Did cry—"the nasty man!"
And each gave way with a startled roar,
To one who from the castle door,

With speed quite naked ran;
He jumped into the spacious ring,
And straight the victor down did fling,
Then looked around, and loud did bawl,
When each one knew Sir Billy the Tall!

The champion now most strange to tell,
Did change his shape, and each knew well
Lord Henry ! who the battle fought,
And won the prize the Ladye sought.

XXV.

The Dame her son now fondly kissed,
And pressed him to her throbbing breast,
For, though she seemed of courage high,
Her heart yet heaved with many a sigh.—
But Henry still she did not greet,
Although he bowed to her very feet.
I need not tell how all the crowd,
Cried shame, that she should be so proud—
Said he deserved a richer fee,
Than her fair daughter Margery—
She was his due, each matron cried,
And straight he flew to Margery's side.

XXVI.

The Dame, she thought of the large Pig-stye,
She thought of the Dung-hill too;

Then tossed her head, and belched a sigh,
And said "she is thy due—
No longer still at variance be,
Pride's vanquished now, and love is free."
She then gave Margery's trembling hand
To Henry, but he scarce could stand,
And bade him use her well, for she
His wife should now hereafter be ;
She hoped the company too would stay,
And view her daughter's wedding day.—

XXVII.

They now retired to rest awhile,
And Henry told with many a smile,
How he discomfited Sir Billy,
And made him look so wonderous silly ;
And how his page the knight then bore,
And placed him at her chamber door :
And how the Dwarf had found the book,
And hid it in a secret nook ;
And how from it a spell he took,
Which changed his face, and shape, and look ;

And how by help of this strange charm,
He paced the castle free from harm;
And how Sir Billy's coat and breeches,
Gilpin had stolen and ripped the stitches,
While yet he slept, and how that morn,
The stolen doublet he had worn,
The Dame she listened much amazed,
And oft in silent wonder gazed :
She then did vow that page to tame,
Before another morning came,
The precious treasure she would save,
And send it back to Simon's grave.—
The honey'd words, the tender things,
Which passed between them I'll not tell,
Nor of the joys which true love brings,
I shrewdly guess you know them well.

XXVIII.—XXX.

A flea, or something worse had bit
Sir Billy as he lay ;
It rous'd him, and his bed he did quit,
When he heard a terrible fray :

He sought his clothes both far and wide,
And in vain he bawled aloud,
Till peeping through a hole he spied,
Below the bustling crowd ;
In the midst a warlike figure stood,
Arrayed in his best clothes ;
In a hurry he ran in an angry mood,
To tweak the villain's nose.
Hence to the yard unclothed he ran,
And hence they cried " the nasty man,"
Who took him then for some lewd wight,
And not Sir Billy that modest knight.



Still Tommy played, tho' hushed his song,
To shew his skill he did prolong
A squeaking symphony, and oft
The tankard's foaming contents quaffed :
Sometimes the notes rise high, now fall,
Now scarcely are they heard at all ;

Now all at once a crash tremendous,
Makes them all cry "good saints defend us ;"
Now seems it like a nutmeg grating ;
And now it seems a parrot prating ;
Last a smart jig concludes the whole
His tortured hearers to console.
After a silence most expressive,
The Ladye fair with looks impressive,
Asked why, he did not seek the place
Where merit shines with its own grace ;
And leave his native village where
They treat him like a dancing-bear ;
By gaping clowns, and idiots led,
By monkeys teased, and fools illbred—
Tom did not like this speech to hear,
For spite of all, the place was dear,
Where first he drew his vital breath,
And where he wished to rest till death.
Less liked he still those words to hear
Which ranked him with a dancing bear !
With flashing eyes he thus again
Loudly resumed his fiddling strain.

THE
L A Y
OF
THE POOR FIDDLER.

CANTO SIXTH.

THE
HISTORY OF THE
CITY OF
NEW-YORK
FROM
THE
FIRST
SETTLEMENT
TO
THE
PRESENT
TIME
BY
J. C. HEATON

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THE
LAY OF THE POOR FIDDLER.

CANTO SIXTH.

I.

LIVES there the man so hard, and short of feeling,
I would not value him an apple-peeling,

Whose heart ne'er leaps when home he turns ;
And as each well known scene appears,
And each accustomed sound he hears,

His callous breast ne'er burns.

That man's most honored parts I'd kick,
And thrash him with my fiddle-stick.

II.

My home I'll prize whate'er my lot,
My home!—'t will never be forgot;
And if of friends or kin bereft,
Still numerous pleasures yet are left;
Still thro' each field, and lane, I'll stray,
And think of many a happy day,
Once spent in that beloved retreat,
Unenvied by the rich and great;
Where happiness unsought for came,
Though far from wealth, or power, or fame.
Unnoticed then, but happier far
Than they who wear the glittering star;
Heaven's choicest blessings I possess,
Health and contentment—you may guess the rest.
Though now with numerous cares oppress,
My weary head I there can rest,
And sooth my griefs, and calm my fears,
And spend my last declining years;
And though forgotten and alone,
There will I breath my dying groan.

III.

Not jeered like me! to Marnock Hall
The fiddlers sped, at ready call;
Tramping from far and near they came,
At the high bidding of the Dame;
Alike for drink, or music willing,
The jovial red-nosed laughing crew,
Played merrily whilst each can was filling,
Whilst briskly round the goblets flew.

IV.

I will not sing the splendid rites,
Nor of the number of wax lights;
Nor what provision disappeared,
Of these gay fêtes you oft have heard.
And telling what is known before,
Will often raise a good loud snore;
So lest to sleep you feel inclined,
Another subject soon I'll find.

V.—VII.

Now mirth and glee resounded high,
And grief and care far off did fly;

When Gilpin thought to have some fun,
Before the jovial feast was done :
He stole Sir Billy's foaming cup,
And in a trice the juice did sup ;
Then whispered in his startled ear,
Jack Filch had stolen his can of beer ;
When Billy looked and found it gone,
He called him lousy-pated John ;
Which title so provoked the wight,
He stripped and challenged him to fight :
But Henry and the knight arose,
Th' enraged warriors to compose :
Fierce Jacky looked, yet nothing said,
But griped his fist, and shook his head—
A fortnight from that very day,
As Billy homeward bent his way,
A swinging blow at side o'th' head,
Again did lay him down for dead :
Some peasants passing rather late,
Found Billy in that piteous state
And to the castle bore him strait :
He soon recovered, but his sconce,
Would never after bear a bounce.

VIII.

Gilpin now fearing lest his master,
 Should see the cause of this disaster;
 Made off, and sought the buttery,
 Where many a bondsman revelled free,—
 There Jemmy Magee his goblet raised,
 And drank and oft the liquor praised.

IX.

Gilpin bethought him of the stone,
 Which Jemmy at his hump had thrown;
 And swore that he should dearly rue
 That ever he the boother threw:
 He teased him first with angry strife,
 And told how Hob had smouched his wife;
 Then off his plate he filched the meat,
 And all his nice plum-pudding eat;
 Then creeping off so sly behind,
 His chair from under him quite kind
 He sudden plucked, down Jemmy fell;
 But first he caughted to save himself;

THE END OF THE FIRST PART OF THE POEM.

The table-cloth with viands spread,
He pulled—it followed—on his head.
Plates, dishes, all came clattering down,
Enough t' have cracked a lawyer's crown.—
With puddings all bespattered o'er,
Silent he lay upon the floor ;
Some thought him dead, but other saw
A custard right upon his maw
Which he lay sucking—rightly guessed
Of a bad job to make the best !
Back to the parlour Gilpin hasting ;
Right sore afraid of a good sound basting :
In a darkened nook he soon did go,
And grinned, and shouted, “ Oh ! Oh ! Oh ! ”

; The good fiddler came and that good

pointed out X. The good fiddler came and that good

The Dame now hearing this affray,
And fearing it might last all day ;
Bid every fiddler sing a song,
To stop each noisy wagging tongue,
First roaring rattling Willie came,
And bowing, stepped unto the Dame ;

His song was pitched, and thus began
The rattling, tippling, roaring man.

XI.

Willie.

It was a toper one Saturday night,
The fire shines bright on yon Ale-house wall,
And he would spend a shilling so bright,
For strong liquor will still be lord of all,
Blithely he posted with jolly red face,
To where the fire shines on yon Ale-house wall,
But that night was scarce o'er when in piteous case,
He found that strong liquor was lord of all.

He pawned his shirt and his breeches both
Where the fire shines bright on yon Ale-house
wall;
He then did swear a terrible oath,
For ire that liquor was lord of all.

XII.

In a hurry home he naked ran
From where the fire shines on yon Ale-house
wall ;

The night was too cold for a naked man,
Tho' strong liquor was still the lord of all.

His limbs were cold, tho' his face was red

As the fire that shines on yon Ale-house wall ;
He craved for admission his wife was in bed,

For strong liquor was there the lord of all:

She looked through the window, and bade him go
Where the fire shines bright on yon Ale-house
wall ;

Or she on his hot skull would throw

The liquor that is not lord of all !

He shivering ran' with might and main,

To where the fire shines on yon Ale-house wall ;
But the door was lock'd, he bawled in vain,
For strong liquor was there the lord of all.

When morning came, quite dead he lay,
Close by the door in yon Ale-house wall;
The frost his blood had chilled they say,
And strong liquor is still the lord of all.

Now all ye topers when ye view
The fire shining bright on an Ale-house wall;
Pray for his soul who once did rue,
That strong liquor was e'er the lord of all.

XIII.—XXII.

As ended Willie's simple strain,
Up rose an out-at-th'-elbow poet;
His merit in the dark had lain,
And few there are who e'er will know it.
Much of the wild and wonderful
He loved to picture in his song;
Sometimes he roared like a bitten bull,
Then soft as the breeze he swept along.

XXIII.

Saturney.

A Ladye sat by a river's stream

When the wild winds had sunk to rest ;

And the blue waves danced in the moon's pale
beam,

Which shone on her sable vest.

Her form was graceful as yon deer,

That flies o'er the meadows so gay ;

Her face was lovely as the rose

That blooms in the month of May.

O had you seen that piteous sight,

A sight it was sad to see ;

You never would have forgot the night,

You strolled on the banks of the Dee.

Her hands she clasped in wild despair,

To the moon then she seemed to pray ;

No tear did drop from her eye so fair,

Yet it sparkled in the bright ray.

She sighed as if her heart would break,
And wildly looked around ;
Then a letter from her bosom did take,
As she gazed on the dew-spangled ground.

She saw not the moon, she saw not the ground,
Nor the river's hoarse voice did she hear ;
The fierce winds did whistle she heard not the
sound,
For she fancied her lover was near.

" Begone from my sight vile monster," she cry'd,
" Nor dare to insult my last hour ;
I know thou art come my sad fate to deride,
But I soon shall be free from thy power.

" O shield me kind Heaven, forgive my rash crime,
Let a sufferer's prayer reach thy throne ;
May thy wrath and thy vengeance at some future
time,
O'ertake my deceiver alone."

She ceased—the parting waves received
For ever her beauteous form ;
The moon hid her face, and the wind did howl,
’Twas the sound of the coming storm.

The angry tempest gathered around,
Black and heavy the clouds did roll ;
Strange terror did seize Lord Scroop at the sound,
As he drank of the festive bowl.

The wind did shake every turret so tall,
And a death-like moan sounded near ;
A horrible shriek rang thro’ the hall,
When a spectre pale did appear !

Astonishment seized on every heart,
Like stocks they were motionless all ;
They saw Lord Scroop from his goblet start,
And aloud he for help did call.

His face did wear an ashy hue,
And his eye-balls did wildly roll ;

His lips were like to the whinstone blue,
Strange terror had seized his soul.

Still paler grew his haggard cheek,
As the spectre clung to his side ;
Its icy hand his blood had chilled,
He sunk—he groaned—and died.

Still to this day, no mortal wight,
Dare enter that castle gate ;
Strange forms 'tis said, do nightly tread,
Where its owner once proudly sate.

Ye youths who hear this tale beware,
Break not your vows your plighted love ;
Or that dread power, which guards the fair,
Will hurl swift vengeance from above.

XXIV.

So sweet was Sawney's piteous lay,
Scarce marked the guests how dark it grew ;

Tho' long before the close of day,
Each one his neighbour scarce could view.

But now when Sawney ceased his bawl,
They shuddered, and each glass did fall
From every opened mouth so wide.
'The Dame how she did sweat and blow;
She feared a visit from below,

And scarce her terror could she hide—
'Gilpin for fear did strangely roar
And flat he fell 'gainst the pantry door.

XXV.

Then all at once, down the chimney came
Awful to tell—*soot, smoke, and flame!*
The guests with dust were covered o'er,
And clouds of smoke rolled through the door;
The ceiling once of snowy white,
Was now most hideous to the sight,
All covered with a suit of black—
But look! each eye beholds a sack
Of large dimensions, marching up

The chimney—and an awful smell,
Salutes each oustretched nose right well.—

When this strange business was o'er,
The Dwarf was gone and seen no more !

XXVI.

When ended was the dire commotion,
Some heard a terrible explosion ;
Some an unmannered foot did find
Applied most lustily behind ;
A hollow voice was heard by some,
Cry out aloud “ COME GILPIN COME ! ”
And near the spot where Gilpin fell,
They saw a sack, most strange to tell
Wide yawning, and a hideous sprite,
Seize on the mischief-making wight :
The men right fearfully did quake,
And every bended knee did shake ;
But Billy loudly roar'd and prayed,
And flat upon the floor he laid,
Sputt'ring and squeezing hard his nose,
And safely guarding it with clothes—

At length he rose with much ado,
And looked most laughable to view,
So frightened was he at the smell,
The reason why, he could not tell,
But some strange words he faintly uttered,
And 'tween each syllable he sputtered :
'T was long before they understood,
What 't was he meant, if ill, or good ;
At last by fits and starts he told,
His tongue it could no longer hold,
How he had seen, he was quite sure,
Come marching from the cellar-door
A man *with a blanket wrapped round,*
With a leathern girdle it was bound ;
And that same stench before he had felt,
It matters not where it was smelt ;
Suffice it to say—(how they knew not)
This was the conjurer Simon Scott !!

XXVII:

'The gaping crowd, with looks so pale,
And hair uplifted, heard the tale ;

No sound was heard, no motion made,
Till one more frightened than the others ;
With cheeks white as an egg new-laid,
Made off and left his wife and brothers.
The rest like frighted sheep soon followed,
The women shrieked, the soldiers hallooed.
None daring now behind to look,
Each for a ghost his neighbour took.
Scrambling, fighting, kicking, swearing,
Doors quite off the hinges tearing,
Men and maids together squeezing,
Heads and feet promiscuous seizing ;
Soon the castle was well cleared,
From this rabble as I have heard,
And each began to roar and pray,
When fright had ta'en all sense away ;
And when safe housed, from danger free,
They vowed no more that place to see ;
But snug and warm in cot remain,
Nor tread ambition's path again.

XXVIII.—XXXI.

The marriage rites I need not tell :
Nor what soon afterwards befell,—
And all that now I've got to say,
Is that for husbands I will pray,
To bounteous heaven that you may get,
And quickly too, what no maid yet,
Did ever coyishly refuse,
But on considering on't she rues ;
And wishes oft her tongue was slit,
For missing such a lucky hit :
Then maidens let me now advise,
If you would be discreet and wise
When to your arms a lover flies,
Say nought for once—you'll gain the prize !

Hushed is the fiddle—Tommy's gone,
But did he roam, unhoused, unknown,
Again thro' wilds and deserts drear ?
No succour nigh, or alehouse near ?

Oh no :—close by this stately hall,
So snug, with newly white-washed wall,
Appears Tom's cot ; with lattice clean,
And window-shutters painted green :
A garden, hen-pen, and a stye,
Well stock'd with sundries, stand close by ;
And every want is well supplied,
And every blessing is enjoyed.
There oft at eve, when the rude blast
Howled round his cot—of times long past
He told the long and mournful tale,
And sung—and quaffed the nut-brown ale ;
Whilst circled round the cheerful blaze,
The listening guests with strange amaze,
Oft heard the tales of former days.—
When summer with gay mantle spread
The smiling earth with bounties fed ;
When o'er the fields of waving corn,
The fragrant breath of balmy morn,
Stole soft by fanning zephyrs borne ;
Then seated near some spreading oak,
To rapturous strains his soul awoke !

And oft his fiddle would he raise,
 And sing the deeds of other days:
 The listening hind would drop his spade,
 Forgetful of his hardy trade;
 And each sweet maid the strain to catch,
 Would soft and slow the door unlatch;
 And the lone brook that crept along,
 Bore on its breast the fiddler's song.

NOTES.

NOTES TO CANTO THE FIRST.

Note I.

The supper was over at Mac Marnock Hall.—P. 15.

I AM sorry that I cannot give my readers either the pedigree of this illustrious family, or the topographical and historical account of the ancient edifice and its environs, as my friend the Fiddler never favoured me with so valuable a piece of information ; but should suppose from the tenor of the poem, it was situated in Scotland, near the English borders ; and that the time when this scene commenced, was when thieving and plundering were carried on to a great extent between the two countries, sanctioned by the example of Lords, Knights, and other hen-roost heroes of that age.

Having hinted thus far, I shall leave the rest to be developed by the profound and scientific researches of our learned Antiquarians ; who like travellers that have long journed over desarts, wild and uncomfortable, and, at length arriving

at a country where nature has displayed her bounteous hand, in adorning it with every thing that can please the eye, or gratify the taste,—wisely resolve to turn back and retrace their weary footsteps to those inhospitable regions they have just quitted, merely for the pleasure of recalling to mind some of the uncomfortable sensations they experienced during their tedious march !

Note II.

Or talked of sweethearts in the pantry.—P. 16.

This is generally the place where the menial tribe resort to converse about their loves.—Why they should prefer it, has never yet, I believe, been demonstrated, but it is my opinion (with due deference to the other learned opinions which may hereafter be given) that the gloom which often pervades a pantry, answers the same end to them as the gloomy covert of the woods and groves to the more refined classes of society ; and therefore I think this line, truly poetical as well as descriptive of the manners of so valuable a part of the community, and that it certainly does great credit to Tommy's genius,—but as I cannot now enlarge, perhaps at some future time I may favour the world with an essay on the subject, provided no other profound metaphysical or physiological writer

seeing its importance, shall in the mean time anticipate my intentions.

Note III.

*If Daddy's murderer I see,
I'll shoot him with my great pop-gun!*—P. 19.

This seems more characteristic of the puny revenge of a child than what the minstrel sings in a poem, highly celebrated in the present day, which runs thus,

“ And if I live to be a man,
My father's death revenged shall be.”

Note IV.

*By night or day he could foretel,
The change of empires—and foul weather.*—P. 20.

From this it seems he was fully as clever as our almanack astrologers of the present age, who certainly display talents of the most exalted kind, in being able to turn their minds from the loftiest heights of human knowledge, to give us (even in the same page with the infallible predictions concerning the rise and fall of Kingdoms, States, and Empires,) such useful and profitable intelligence as the following, viz.:—“ rain” or “ fair a few days either before or after;” and as Dr. Johnson observes, “ Every man acquainted with the

“common principles of human action, will look
 “with veneration on the man who is at one time
 “combating Locke, and at another making a ca-
 “techism for children in their fourth year,”—so
 must we for the same reason, revere the talents
 of those who can turn their eyes from viewing the
 distant fate of nations, to examine into the pro-
 bable descent of a shower of rain!

Note V.

Back I shall come you need not fear.

Ere the jack-daws see the sun.—P. 27.

This is far more characteristic than if he had said, “Ere Aurora with her rosy hands, opens the
 “golden portals of the east, and ushers in the
 “king of day, then expect me,”—or if he had ex-
 pressed himself thus,—“Ere the dappled clouds
 “with gold bedecked proclaim the approach of
 “morn, await my coming.”—These expressions
 would have been far too sublime for Sir Billy to
 have uttered on the occasion, and would have
 sounded quite ludicrously from the mouth of such
 a person as he is described to be.—Yet nothing is
 more common in many literary productions of the
 present age, than to hear of a ragged fellow who
 can neither read nor write, pouring forth a torrent
 of enthusiastic rhapsodies with all the energy of a

Shakespeare or the dignity of a Milton, on the most trivial occasions.

————— “ ’Tis unnatural

And he who once o’ersteps the bounds of nature,

Sinks ’midst the ’whelming flood of inspiration

And ne’er rises more !”

“ Jackdaws are birds that generally build their nests on the highest part of a building,” and hence Sir Billy very justly infers, they will behold the sun before he is visible to any of the other inmates of the castle,—which is a very natural as well as poetical idea.

Note VI.

But while our Fiddler rests awhile, &c.—P. 29.

For the introduction of this digression, I have only the same apology to make with which a celebrated writer has graced a similar parenthesis, viz. :—“ It was written upon the spot during the “summer of 1811, and,—I scarce know why ;—the “reader must excuse its appearance here if he can.”

11. 10. 1978

[illegible][illegible]

NOTES TO CANTO II.

Note I.

*When the Owl in his great wisdom cries
Whoo-oo, then shuts his learned eyes.*—P. 36.

From this it appears, that shutting the eyes after a silly speech, even in the brute creation, as well as amongst our own species, is thought to be indicative of a great depth of understanding.

Note II.

*And home returning thou mayest swear
Never so stiff stood up thy hair !!!*—P. 36.

The effect produced on visiting the ruins of an abbey alone, at the solemn hour of midnight, is here finely described, and is far more natural, in my opinion, than what is so much admired in a verse from a celebrated poem on the same subject, the conclusion of which runs thus,

And, home returning, soothly swear,
Was never scene so sad and fair!

Note III

*With strange conceits the roof was driven,
And each corbell was carved with uncouth pride,
In shapes which seemed put there to try,
If monkish gravity they might defy.—P. 40.*

These grotesque figures so much admired in the gothic style of architecture, are very happily imitated in this our present day and generation, and, if this taste continues, instead of having the soft and elegant symmetry of a Venus or an Apollo, to decorate our houses and gardens, we may soon expect to view in their place, the rude and delightful disproportions, of monsters that for ugliness would bear the palm from an Indian idol!

Note IV.

*You would have thought the windows tall
To shut out day and night were made,
Or else some statute had forbade
The use of what was given to all.—P. 41.*

It is astonishing to observe the contradictory spirit which has prevailed over the generality of mankind in all ages;—whatever is forbidden, or whatever is thought to be the most difficult to obtain, is sure to be an object above all others the most sought after: whilst those pleasures which are easily enjoyed, and to the attainment of which

no obstacles are presented, are thrown away, as worthless and uninviting.—When the light of Heaven was free unto all men, our ancestors seemed to guard as much as possible, against the danger of admitting too much of it into their habitations; but now, when three feet of light is more than what many people can afford to pay for, we every where see *acres* of glass,—and a genteel habitation, presents the appearance of a fairy palace, where a single touch will utterly demolish its glittering and splendid appearance.

Note 5.

*But lo'tis gone! the stinking charm
Dispels and frees his nose from harm.*—P. 47.

In tales of enchantment we often read of some hideous sight suddenly disappearing, when those to whom they have been opposed, have had courage enough to face them boldly, as the following extract from a very rare and valuable manuscript wil shew:—

“And it came to passe that Syr Launcelot
“sawe a grete fyre brennyng and divers fierce
“and terribell thynges, dyd seeme to issue there-
“from, so myghty dreadfull to beholde that none
“note looke thereon for feare.—and there was a
“very dedlye stenche, so that no mon could byde,

“but Syr Launcelot lyfteying up his hondes be-
 “soughte that this stencche mote deperte from
 “him, and rushynge in boldlye, lyke unto a lyon,
 “—lo! the fyre that was brennyng, and the
 “terribell thynges that dyd seeme to come there-
 “from, and the noysome stencche dyd all sud-
 “denlye flee and he went on his waye unmolest-
 “ed.”

Note VI.

A noise afar off he hears 'tis said

And through the dark mist he can see.—P. 52.

There is a tale I remember to have heard our
 washerwoman relate to me when a child, of a
 mighty magician, who was guilty of the most enor-
 mous cruelties to those fair ladies, who had the
 misfortune to fall into his hands.—His castle was
 situated on a plain, that was constantly enveloped
 with a dense fog, which prevented any from find-
 ing their way through the numerous snares and
 pitfalls with which it was infested.—Several va-
 liant knights hearing of his conduct, endeavoured
 to overcome him, but they had never been heard
 of since the adventure was undertaken, and many
 despaired of ever seeing his overthrow accom-
 plished.—At length a strange knight made known
 his intention of executing the arduous enterprize,

but every one pitied him, and was confident that he was rushing headlong to destruction.

This knight was constantly attended by a dwarf, who, by many was supposed to be a supernatural being.—The account his master gave of him was this:—as he was hunting one summer's evening, and had strayed at some distance from his attendants, he heard a voice crying most piteously, Oh, Oh, Oh,—imagining it was some one in distress, he immediately rode towards the place from whence the sound proceeded, when suddenly this unshapely thing darted from a thicket, and so frightened his horse that the spirited animal plunged and threw him, but the dwarf immediately laying hold of the bridle prevented him from running away, and held the stirrup whilst the knight regained his seat;—from that time he had been in his service, nor had he ever found reason to repent of his choice, as Gilpin (which was the name he generally called himself) had several times freed him from the consequences of some disasters which might have terminated fatally but for his interference,—and he had not the least doubt but that through his help he should overcome the monster, who had spread such terror throughout the neighbourhood.

At length the day appointed came that was to

determine the fate of this bold adventurer,—he was attended to the borders of the magician's territories by a numerous train of princes and nobles, who offered up prayers incessantly for his safe return.

In a short time they saw before them a thick mist,—the cavalcade stopped,—and soon the knight and his trusty dwarf were seen to enter sword in hand through the dreadful vapour, which immediately closed upon them, and screened their forms from observation.

Most anxiously did the crowd await the event, and every mind was wrought up to the highest pitch with fear and expectation.—when suddenly the mist disappeared, and with joy they beheld the knight returning with the magician's head on the point of his sword, followed by his dwarf and a numerous train of blooming ladies and valiant knights, whom he had rescued from captivity, and who were immediately recognised by their respective friends with joyful acclamations.—Blessings resounded from every side on the head of their deliverer, and every one seemed eager to testify their gratitude by presenting him with some valuable token of remembrance.

After the first tumult of joy was over, they eagerly enquired by what means he had been en-

abled to accomplish this wonderful change ;—having received some refreshment he thus began.—

‘ When Gilpin and myself arrived near the
‘ verge of the mist, he bid me hold fast by the
‘ skirts of his doublet, and he would lead me
‘ through the snares and pitfalls which would be-
‘ set our path. I accordingly complied, and with
‘ my sword in one hand and Gilpin’s skirt in the
‘ other, followed him—on entering I felt an un-
‘ usual heat which seemed to increase as we
‘ proceeded, and almost threatened to suspend
‘ respiration ; however I resolved to go on at
‘ the hazard of my life and brave the consequen-
‘ ces. Gilpin bade me tread very cautiously, as
‘ the path by which we were going was very nar-
‘ row and a false step would plunge me headlong
‘ into the yawning gulphs, which gaped horribly
‘ on each side.—After walking on in this manner,
‘ for about half an hour the heat gradually de-
‘ creased.—I saw nothing all this time but a thick
‘ white vapour, which appeared very bright, but
‘ at the same time so dense that I could not even
‘ see my hand.—Gilpin now told me that he
‘ plainly saw the magician’s castle, and on the
‘ battlements he could distinguish the magician
‘ himself who seemed highly diverted at behold-
‘ ing us in his territories, and was heating a chal-

‘dron of pitch for our entertainment when we
‘arrived at his castle. I was rather alarmed at
‘this intelligence, but Gilpin said I had nothing
‘to fear, and that if I would follow his injunc-
‘tions we should soon have the satisfaction of
‘seeing the downfall of this cruel monster.

‘He told me the magician expected we should
‘arrive at his castle, for he saw that I was under
‘supernatural guidance, but he was quite mis-
‘taken as to the power he had to cope with, “for”
‘added Gilpin, “he knows the charm which up-
“holds him can never be broken until a human
“being, endowed with a supernatural intellect,
“shall tread on a certain talisman, which lies con-
“cealed within his castle.—That beingam I, though
“the magician suspects it not, but supposes I
“am some familiar spirit that owing thee a grudge,
“hath taken this effectual method of leading thee
“on to destruction.

“When we are through this mist thou wilt see
“his castle, and the magician will come down and
“invite us in: thou must boldly enter the gates
“sword in hand and I will follow, first taking
“care to make a cross on the outside with this
“yellow earth I now give thee, as that will secure
“our safe return. After we are through the gates
“I will again take the lead, but take care, and do not

“let the dazzling splendour which will every
“where meet thine eyes attract thy attention, for
“thou must attentively observe my motions; and
“whatever I do, take care thou doest likewise.”

‘After these instructions we walked on for a
‘little while, when suddenly I saw a magnificent
‘castle with brazen doors, and pinnacles that glit-
‘tered in the sun-beams like polished gold; the
‘windows were of pure crystal, and every part
‘of this splendid building seemed as if wrought
‘by the hands of fairies; so exquisite was the
‘workmanship, and so wonderful the beauty of
‘its appearance. I did not however lose sight of
‘my guide, but closely observed him till we came
‘to the gates, when a venerable old man with
‘snowy locks came and beckoned us to enter. I
‘made a cross on the outside, and sword in hand
‘boldly advanced through the opened portal,
‘first looking behind to see that Gilpin followed,
‘which he did very closely. When we were
‘through the gate, he again went first, following
‘the old man, who, after taking us through a
‘number of magnificent apartments, perfumed
‘with the most fragrant odours, and adorned with
‘the most splendid ornaments that the imagina-
‘tion could possibly devise,—led us into a room
‘where a table was placed, covered with the most

delicate viands to tempt our longing appetites. Gilpin sat down, and accordingly I followed his example.—I saw him look earnestly at me and take a peach, and immediately the old man offered me a bunch of grapes which I declined, at the same time saying, I would gladly be permitted to help myself to a peach; the latter looked sternly at me for a moment, but soon assuming a placid countenance, he politely begged I would take only what was agreeable,—he then offered Gilpin wine which he took. I observed he did not swallow it, but held the liquor in his mouth, and as our host was helping me to another, he conveyed a small quantity of it into the old man's glass which was standing near, and the rest he squirted into a box that he held in his hand. I appeared to drink mine likewise, but afterwards took an opportunity of conveying it into my handkerchief without being noticed. The old man now took up his glass, and drinking off the contents, said, he hoped we should remain in his castle all night, where, every thing we saw would be at our command, and in the morning we might resume our journey; this was a very different reception to what I had imagined, and my surprise was still more augmented at hearing my dwarf assure him we should stay that night

“at his castle.—However, I kept silence, and attentively watched their motions. I now observed Gilpin close his eyes and sink back in the chair as if asleep—accordingly I did the same, and remained in that situation till Gilpin surprised me by calling out, “rouse, Sir Knight, our work is almost finished.”—Immediately I started from my sleeping posture, and opening my eyes beheld in the place of this venerable old man, an ugly deformed monster asleep, and apparently in my power, I seized my sword and was going to attempt his destruction, when Gilpin held my hands, and begged I would restrain my impetuosity, for the magician was at present invulnerable, and would probably awake if I offered him any violence. He informed me that the magician had fallen asleep through the effects of the liquor conveyed into his glass, and had immediately resumed his proper shape.—He then said he would hasten and seek the talisman, whilst I remained in the room, and on a signal being given, I must speedily, and at one blow if possible, cut off the magician’s head, as he would then have lost all power of defence.—All this as you see has been fortunately accomplished, together with the deliverance of a number of unhappy captives, who when the spell was dissolved, im-

‘mediately regained their natural forms and were
‘set at liberty.—I have now only to recommend
‘my dwarf’s services to your kindness, hoping
‘they will not go unrewarded, but that he may
‘amply share with me any benefits you may feel
‘disposed to confer.’

The knight and his squire were now conducted in triumph to the city, and there remained for some time, crowned with the highest testimonials of gratitude and respect, till on the death of the king this knight was unanimously elected in his stead, and arrived to the high honour of reigning over a people by whom he was universally beloved.

The dwarf shared with him the honours and labours of the state for a number of years, and never was a kingdom more happily governed.

Gilpin had always a strong propensity to mischief, but this disposition was properly kept under by his master, who had absolute controul over him, and never let him do a material injury to any one.—He would often go apart from the rest of the company and shout “Oh! Oh! Oh!” most piteously, but would soon after return and be as mischievous as ever.

It was supposed that he never died, but was translated into the other world in his natural body. The following I have heard related as an authentic account respecting his disappearance.

One day whilst he was teasing the guests who were invited to a feast in honor of the king's birthday—the room suddenly grew excessively dark, and a flash of lightning darted full upon the dwarf who fell down, shouting “Ah! Ah! Ah!” and was never seen more.

But the school has been closed since the summer of 1907.

NOTES TO CANTO THIRD.



Note I.

*But happily for him his head
Received the lusty blow.—P. 60.*

This reminds me of an anecdote I once heard of a bookseller who was one day airing himself at the shop-door, when his sign which was the bust of Socrates, fell close at his feet, without doing him any harm.—Some of his friends afterwards congratulating him upon his providential escape,—he good humouredly said, “think not that my head, but rather that the bust has had a lucky escape from a serious injury.”

Note II.

*For had it lower been 'tis said
It would have laid him low.—P. 60.*

An excellent pun, and worthy of a place in any of our modern comedies,—for it does not often

happen that authors now-a-days are *guilty* of hitting upon a pun or *bon-mot*, except now and then a bungling attempt, which instead of shewing an exuberance of fancy, only serves to exhibit the scantiness of its materials.

Note III.

*Away Lord Henry galloped fast,
O'er hill and winding dale,
Nor halted e'en his spittle to cast,
Till he spied his native vale.*—P. 61.

I would recommend a careful examination of the latter part of this verse by the reader, as it is finely descriptive of an effect produced by fear.

Note IV.

*Did pass unknown to any there;
He pinched the legs of each sleeping knight,
When each awoke and loud did swear,
The fleas most horridly did bite!*—P. 64.

A far more natural conclusion for persons in their situation, than the following.—

“And each did after swear and say,
There only passed a wain of hay”

Vide Lay of the Last Minstrel.—P. 81.

Note V.

The watch from off the ramparts high,

Saw two large gib-cats passing by.—P. 65.

In the renowned history of the giant Glumfunderloo, there is a similar circumstance, where a captive Princess is changed into a hen by the interposition of a fairy, and in this disguise with the help of her wings, she eludes the vigilance of her guard and escapes.

Note VI.

So he made a wry face at the startled child,

And off he ran through the forest wild.—P. 66.

Very natural for persons who are prevented from venting their rage in a more effectual manner.

Note VII.

She thought perhaps in the book he had read,

And that his scanty wits were fled.—P. 70.

We have often heard of the dreadful effects produced on the human mind by reading magical books, &c. and I have now by me a very curious and rare pamphlet on this subject, printed in black

letter, (date unknown), which I intend shortly to dispose of by auction,—it will be put up at the low price of one hundred guineas, and can assure the bibliomaniacs it is far short of its real worth, as the deity whom they worship (I mean Time) has taken it in a special manner under his protection, insomuch as to have rendered it almost illegible, and consequently of inestimable value. From this work, with much labour, I have made the following extract illustrative of the above passage.

“ And by ytte there was a lyttel boke, and no
 “ lybeynge thynge mote looke thereynne, yette dyd
 “ Syr Martyn, heynged thereto bye reasonne
 “ of the counsell of the devyll, ryghte foolysshelpe
 “ oppen ytte; when suddenly he fell downe as gyff
 “ deede—and from thatte tyme he neuer spak agen.”

Note VIII.

Alas! she was uncommon flat.—P. 70.

A figurative expression, and agreeing well with the solemnity of the subject.

Note IX.

*Then idly swung in a rocking chair,
To sooth her bosom's anxious care.—P. 71.*

—This is well known to be of service in lulling the troubled mind to rest, and soothing the sorrows of the care-worn soul, as we see exemplified in the method made use of to keep children quiet.

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shadows of the night
 what has hitherto been enveloped in the darkest
 mathematical illustration, render as clear as noon-day
 things in their true light, and for a couple weeks
 this once difficult problem, which will I hope not
 to me a very probable and satisfactory solution of
 out any more doubt, pointed to the great question
 account for this seeming anomaly, as I shall with-
 outness which have been obtained in order to
 It will be unnecessary to review the various
 as to the cause of the disease, the following notes
 get, I believe, some more satisfactory explanation
 tion of the disease, as pathologists have not
 This is a known fact, and well worthy of our
 I shall be glad to hear of any further progress

NOTES TO CANTO IV.

Note I.

*Where'er you go by dale or hill,
You'll find them journeying southwards still.*—P. 77.

This is a known fact, and well worthy the attention of the learned, as philosophers have never yet, I believe, given any satisfactory explanation as to the cause from whence this emigration arises.

It will be unnecessary to notice the various hypothesis which have been framed in order to account for this seeming anomaly, as I shall without any more delay, proceed to give what appears to me a very probable and satisfactory solution of this once difficult problem, which will I hope set things in their true light, and by a simple mathematical illustration, render as clear as noon day, what has hitherto been enveloped in the darkest shadows of the night.

Philosophers now seem to be pretty well agreed, as to the figure of our earth being an oblate spheroid, flattest at the poles, the equatorial parts being higher than the polar regions in the proportion of 230 to 229.

The following quotation from Dr. Rees's Cyclopædia, relative to the figure and motion of the earth, will at the same time explain our present difficult and important question.

“As the earth revolves about its axis, all its parts will endeavour to recede from the axis of motion, and the equatorial parts, where the motion is greatest, will tend less towards the centre than the rest, their endeavour to fly off from the axis about which they revolve, taking off part of the tendency that way, so that those parts will become lighter than such as are nearer the poles, *and the polar parts will therefore press towards the centre.*”

Granting this, it seems no longer wonderful that bodies from the north should press forward in a southerly direction,—or that Scotchmen should leave their native homes, to wander like exiles in a foreign land!

Note II

*Soon as the horse heard Gilpin wail,
 He snorted loud and whisked his tail,
 But when the elf was fairly on,
 Dear, how he kicked and backwards run.—P. 80.*

It is generally supposed that horses, dogs, and many other animals, have the faculty of seeing supernatural appearances, that are invisible to human beings. The following tradition relative to this subject, will no doubt be acceptable to most of my readers,—it is quoted at length from a valuable work, entitled

‘An auncient and remerkable account of the
 ‘wonderfulle littel Devyl, that in former dayes
 ‘tormented many good Catholicks in such wyse,
 ‘that they were moved to putte themselves to
 ‘death, with many other straunge and incredible
 ‘marvells recounted therein.

‘Printed by Gilberte Buntwisle in the yeare of
 ‘our Lorde, 1535.—from an ould paper found
 ‘buried in Dame Philpot’s cellar,—supposed to
 ‘have been written by the good Monke Rogero.

‘Stitched by Philip Tagwell, and sold by Gil-
 ‘bert Buntwisle and Timothy Tenterbottom, at
 ‘theire house in Mutton-lane, opposite the Tripe
 ‘Shop that stands neare unto the Breeches-maker

‘ who lives up the narrow entry, next door to the
‘ large house with seven windows, that stands at
‘ the corner of Fiddle-street, as thou goest to
‘ Hockley-in-the-Hole.’

The story is thus related,

‘ A certayne Taylor, myndefulle of his bellye,
‘ rather than his ribb, dyd passe one neete nigh
‘ unto a certain place,—when he hearde a verye
‘ dolefulle lamentation that dyde seeme lyke unto
‘ a chylde in great troubell,—and the voice said—
“ My breeches beholde I have rended into a grete
“ hole, and my mammye will be sore vexed, and
“ will chastyse me with a woefulle chastysemente.
“ Oh that I hadde them agen made whole lyke
“ unto their former state.”—Now the Taylor was
‘ moved with compassion for the chylde, and dyd
‘ speedilye take from out his garments his needles,
‘ and his thred and lykewise all his takle, to go
‘ and helpe the chylde with his breeches,—butte
‘ when he dyd turn towards the place, suddenlye
‘ the creepynge thynges which dyd lyve upon his
‘ bodye, begane to byte as if with one consente,
‘ yea most manfullye, insomuche that he was
‘ forced to stonde styll, so great was the smarte,
‘ butte when he stayed behold they stayed also,—
‘ and he ayled noughte,—at thys he was ryghte

‘ sore amazed, and agen he sette forward, but
‘ these thynges dyd in lyke manner agen tormente
‘ him very sore, and agen he stooode styll, and
‘ marvelled much what thys shoulde mean: now
‘ he considered that if he so continued to go for-
‘ ward he shoulde be bitten even unto deathe,
‘ withoute any gaine or profite that coulde come
‘ therebye,—therefore he would turne backe and
‘ heede not the chylde, neither his breeches:—so
‘ he turned his face homewardes and wente on
‘ his way.

‘ Nowe when he came nyghe unto his house, he
‘ turned in unto a certayn wyse woman, and told
‘ her all he had hearde and felte,—at thys she
‘ lyfted up her handes and sed, “Thou hast fledde
“ from a grete danger, for the voyce that dyd
“ seeme lyke unto the voyce of a cryeing chylde,
“ was the foule littel devyle that faine would have
“ entyced thee into some horribell pitte, or into
“ some noysome stewe, and would there have satte
“ uponne thee till thou hadst been deede.—Now
“ as a token of remembrance unto thee, and unto
“ all thy generations after thee, shalle the creep-
“ ynge thynges continuallye be uponne thee and
“ uponne thy seede, and uponne thy brethren,
“ that they maye remember the grete delyverance
“ wherewythal thou hast been delyvered.”—‘ And
‘ the Taylor deperted and went to his own home.’

1 Note III.

*He who received th' first broken head,
Should be pronounced vanquished.*—P. 88.

This was, I believe, one of the ancient laws, relating to the famous game of cudgel playing, an exercise now almost forgotten, as it has given place to other more *scientific* amusements.

Why it has fallen into disrepute I cannot imagine, unless the skulls worn by the present generation are of so soft a texture as to be unable to bear a blow, without being injured in their *material* as well as *immaterial* parts.

Perhaps in a short time I may be able to draw up a history of this once famous amusement, from some records now in the possession of a literary gentleman, who wishes me to undertake the arduous task, and proposes to call the work, “Cudgeliana, or the history of Cudgel-playing, from its first institution by Shillalicum King of the Wild Irish, in the beginning of the *Christian* Era, down to the present time.”—It will cost me infinite labour before it is completed—but the value when finished, will amply compensate for any trouble and difficulty I may experience during its compilation.

NOTES TO CANTO FIFTH.

Note I.

*For thus was spent that fearful day,
In revelry and joy ;
Which threatened once a sad affray,
And many a streaming eye.—P. 95.*

An excellent illustration of the uncertainty and mutability of all sublunary things.

Note II.

*But if you possess a decent head,
You'll remember the charm which Gilpin read.—P. 97.*

How different is this to the method made use of by many of our modern poets, who for fear, I suppose, any of their readers should happen to possess a bad memory, take care to repeat “o’er
“and o’er, and o’er and o’er again,”—what has already been too often reiterated; whilst our fiddler fearful it seems, even of repeating *once*

again, a thing already known—here leaves the bad memories to shift for themselves, and judiciously goes forward with his story.

Note III.

*But love saw through this quaint disguise,
For love is often mighty wise.—P. 98.*

“If a mayden loveth her lover trulye,” (says an ancient author) “no devyce or enchauntment
“whatever, that shall be putte before her eyes,
“shall availe.”

Note IV.

*And each gave way with a startled roar,
To one who from the castle door,
With speed quite naked ran.—P. 101.*

Very natural for a crowd to give way under these circumstances, and I remember hearing of a gentleman, who, wishing to get through a large concourse of people, in a case of great importance, bethought him of the above method,—and succeeded in making his way through an assembly, where it would have required more than mortal strength to have succeeded in any other manner.

NOTES TO CANTO SIXTH.

Note I.

Enough t' have cracked a lawyer's crown.—P. 114.

It is, I suppose, from the many rude jolts these gentlemen receive from each other, and from the insensibility which they display, our poet infers that their skulls must be of more than ordinary thickness.

Note II.

It was a toper one Saturday night,

The fire shines bright on yon Ale-house wall,

And he would spend a shilling so bright,

For strong liquor will still be lord of all.—P. 115.

This is manifestly an imitation of a song introduced in a celebrated poem, the first verse of which runs thus—

“It was an English Ladye bright,

The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,

And she would marry a Scottish knight,

For Love will still be lord of all.”

I will leave the candid reader to judge which of the two can lay most claim to that necessary (but of late almost forgotten) ingredient, in every dish of literary cookery,—I mean SENSE.

Note III.

*He craved for admission, his wife was in bed,
For strong liquor was there the lord of all.*—P. 116.

“A drunkenne mon” (says a celebrated writer)
“is an ennemie at home—but a drunkenne womon
“is an ennemie bothe at home and abroad.

“A drunkenne mon is an enuemie to himself—
“but a drunkenne womon is an ennemie unto euerie
“one about her.”

Note IV.

*His merit in the dark had lain,
And few there are who e'er will know it.*—P. 117.

This passage cannot be more strikingly illustrated than by quoting the following well known lines—

“Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness in the desert air.”

Note V.

*Then all at once down the chimney came,
Awful to tell—soot, smoke, and flame!—P. 117.*

It is a common saying that “miracles must not be wasted.”—or that wonders are never performed when the ordinary course of events will answer the desired end, so in the present instance Tommy very judiciously keeps in sight the old adage, and instead of a fiery dragon glaring horribly upon the multitude and emitting a sulphureous stench, we here read only of the natural consequences resulting from an approaching storm, causing “soot, smoke, and flame” to roll down the chimney.

It would be well if many other poets instead of resorting on every trivial occasion, to supernatural agency, would make a little more use of the machinery by which nature is guided in her operations, and not sicken our imaginations by exhibiting, instead of the waking images of sober reason, the puerile phantoms of a weak and disordered brain.

THE END.

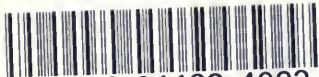
ERRATA.

Page 88, second line from the bottom, for gudge, read cudgel.



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